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THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE AND PROGRAM

CLELAND BOYD McAFEE

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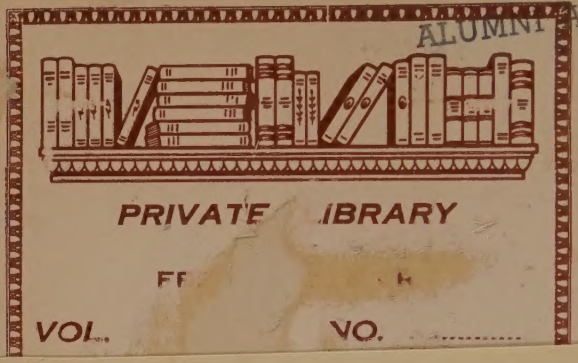

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THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE AND PROGRAM

Twelve Studies for Class Use or Personal Reading

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By
CLELAND BOYD McAFEE

A Textbook in the Standard Leadership Training Curriculum, Outlined and Approved by the International Council of Religious Education

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE studies making up this course were prepared at the request of a committee of the Teacher Training Publishing Association to constitute a textbook in the Standard Leadership Training Curriculum. The members of the committee, and others, have surveyed the material during the preparation but none of them should be held responsible for the way the course is stated. However, it has been immensely helpful to the writer to have the counsel of a large group of readers interested and efficient in religious education.

The use of a considerable number of quotations and footnotes is deliberate. They are intended to remind readers and students that many writers have dealt with the topics here presented and that the same topic may have different angles or be differently expressed. As a teacher the writer has observed that such a method has pedagogic value.

There is no end to the possibilities of the theme of this course. The task has been one of elimination. The writer hopes that the studies will open the way to wider and deeper thinking.

CLELAND B. MCAFEE

Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Chicago,
January, 1929.

Part I

THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE IN ITSELF

Suggestions for Study I

Notice that the course has three parts: The first part covers the message of the Christian religion, Studies I-IV. The second part is transitional, Studies V-VIII, comparing this message with the practices of nations, Churches, and non-Christian religions. The third part deals with the definite Christian program in its various aspects and stages, Studies IX-XII. This outline should guide in the whole course.

The Scripture references should be carefully looked up, and a notebook kept for suggestions from class discussions, collateral reading, and personal thinking.

This first study may be handled according to the outline in the text:

1. The meaning of "religion." Why is no finally acceptable definition available? Try one or two definitions from a dictionary or an encyclopedia and see if your own idea is covered. Is James 1: 27 a definition? How are we helped by thinking of *a* religion instead? What are some of the great religions?

2. The place of Jesus in the Christian religion. Is Harnack's distinction valid? Do you think of Jesus as a guide to religious faith or as an object of faith? Discuss the difference.

3. Two essential ideas of religion in Jesus' teaching: believing and living. What about "creedless religion"? How far are creeds "final"? What is the meaning of "Jesus' way of living"? How are believing and living related in actual experience? Which is first? Describe the resultant Christian character.

4. Four details in Jesus' teaching of religion.

Notebook: 1. Write in a single sentence what religion meant to Jesus, bringing in the elements discussed (if they command your assent) and any others that you think should be included. Consider whether the outline covers religion as a method of securing peace from a troubled conscience and the consequent release of the life from its limitations. Where would you put this?

2. Select some well-known Christian friend, carefully avoiding all use of the name, and write an analysis of his "character" according to the list of traits given in this study, indicating where he is strongest and where he needs strengthening. This may reveal you to yourself!

STUDY I

WHAT JESUS MEANT BY HIS RELIGION

Religion in the Bible. The Bible is clearly a book of religion. Yet the American Standard Version uses the word "religion" but six times and "religious" but twice, and these in only five passages. Nor has it equivalents. It simply does not name its main object; no naming is needed. Four of these eight occurrences of the word refer directly to a particular religion, namely, Judaism. Acts 25:19; 26:5; Gal. 1:13, 14. The other four are general references: "I perceive that ye are very religious." Acts 17:22. "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, . . . this man's religion is vain." James 1:26. "Pure religion and undefiled . . . is this." James 1:27.

The Meaning of "Religion." Is there any such thing as "religion" except in some definite form? One writer says: "Religion is a universal experience . . . but religion is always particular in each group. It is *a* religion."[1] Each of us could name several "religions"—Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam—but every effort to define "religion" proves unsatisfactory. More than fifty definitions are now extant, each the result of some one's sincere desire to single out the particular element in each of these "religions" that

[1] Theodore G. Soares, "Religious Education" (University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 50.

makes it really a "religion." But probably the idea itself is inseparable, just as science is, from its manifestation in a definite form. If a student came to college and asked to study "science," what would happen? Would he not presently be studying some particular science and learning from that one what "science" is? If we want to know what "religion" is in actual practice, we have to study or observe some one religion. Even if we could agree on a definition of religion in general, we yet might not know what Jesus meant by his religion.

Definitions tend to cover phases of the whole reality. No single standard of its meaning can be made good for all men, except in terms of some one religion which is wide enough in its expressions to provide for the distinctive needs of men. This is because religious experiences vary so greatly. Most of them fall within three familiar groups: emotional, intellectual, practical—some centering on feeling, some on rational satisfaction, some on ethical impulse. There is no harm in this variety until one of the groups limits religion to its own type and refuses to recognize the validity of the other manifestations. This occurs when intellectual men look askance upon emotional men, while they in turn are skeptical about the real religion of merely practical men to whom creeds and emotions are unimportant. Only a very rich religion can meet the desires of all these groups. Paul tried to be "all things to all men," I Cor. 9:22. How largely he succeeded can be discovered when one observes the wide use of his teachings by varied religious groups. Romanists and all schools of Protestants find him an authority sup-

porting their special contentions. This does not prove their inconsistencies so much as Paul's richness.

But Paul is as nothing to Jesus at this point. For where Paul merely tried to become all things to all men, Jesus actually has done it. An Indian pundit once objected to Jesus as a religious teacher on the ground that his followers take so many and such varied positions on points of religion, as witness the many denominations and forms of church life. But a fellow Indian, himself a Christian, replied that this was rather to the honor of Christ because it indicated that he gave his disciples liberty instead of bondage, opening wider ranges to them. Most of us will feel that there is something to say on both sides of this issue, but we would not agree to such unity and uniformity as would restrict the liberty of Christian obedience or narrow the outlook of the Christian faith. We must not become too minute in standardizing our religion, saying that "this and this only is true Christianity."

Common sense suggests a limitation to this way of speaking. A scientific man would have a right to call another man unscientific if he did not keep within certain limitations of method and attitude. So a man may be called irreligious without either contempt or arrogance if he lives and thinks outside the boundaries of fundamental religion. He need not be religious as some other man is, any more than a man must be a chemist in order to be a scientist. But religion is a reality, with its own methods and attitudes, as truly as is science. If a man renounces these, he is not religious, whatever else he may be. The same principle applies in the Christian religion. Saying

that a man is not a Christian need not indicate arrogance or bigotry or intolerance. The boundaries of the Christian faith are real and men can be outside of them. To be sure, there is danger of drawing fictitious lines and making them our boundaries when they lie far within the actual boundaries of the purpose of Jesus. Wycliffe said that we must never take any position that would make Jesus a heretic. If we shut out of our fellowship any with whom Jesus is in fellowship, notice where that places him.

Those who try to bring others into Christian relationship—young people, new converts—have a delicate problem. The Christian faith must be definite enough to be worth professing and at the same time rich enough to admit people of different minds and modes of thought. Error on either side is apt to be serious. Some of us speak of Christianity in such vague terms that it is hardly worth anybody's while to consider it, making it merely "a genial good nature that does not allow itself to be troubled by the evils of the world." If anyone should ask us just what it means to become a Christian, we should have to say that it does not mean anything much. On the other hand, some of us speak of Christianity in such narrow terms that many men are repelled from it. We connect it with ideas and programs that are impossible to many minds. So it becomes vital to find out what Jesus meant by his religion.

The Place of Jesus in the Christian Faith. Some years ago Professor Harnack, of Berlin, made a distinction between the religion which Jesus himself held and practiced and the religion which his disciples developed after him—the religion of Jesus and

the religion about Jesus. The point has been much discussed, because it raises the question whether Jesus meant to found a religion or merely to illustrate it. There can be no doubt that Jesus is himself the Center of the Christian faith as we know it.

It has been argued that the New Testament really contains two religions, a religion of Jesus and a religion about Jesus; in other words that Paul and the Early Church made a redemptive religion out of the simple, ethical gospel preached by Jesus. The weight of evidence rather tends in the opposite direction. There was in Jesus Christ, when he was on earth, a consciousness of God which involved the faith afterward held by the early Church. Explain it as we may, there is a vital continuity between Jesus and Paul, between our Lord's life and the subsequent faith of the Church. Apart from a unique, redemptive element in the person of Jesus, the development of the apostolic Church and its theology is inexplicable. It is not unfair to hold that the critical study of the New Testament, as it does justice to the idiosyncrasies of the individual writers and to the differences of outlook which characterize their minds, succeeds in bringing out with new emphasis the fundamental religious unity and interest of their belief in Jesus Christ.[2]

Professor Atkins speaks of the early period when "the Church substituted a mind about Christ for the mind of Christ and tested discipleship by the subtleties of Greek creeds rather than by the Christian spirit and the Christian way."[3] This is always pos-

[2] James Moffatt in the "Standard Bible Dictionary" (Funk & Wagnalls, 1926), p. 11.

[3] Gaius G. Atkins, "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 45.

sible, but it does not make a different religion; it is simply an error within Christianity.

Professor Case argues that the line cannot be drawn between the two phases of faith because Christ became so immediately the object of faith rather than its mere example that we cannot know what elements were peculiar to his personal experience. Dr. Henry van Dyke unites the two very closely:

> The rock of certainty is the mind of Jesus expressed in his living words and in his speaking life. Beyond that we need not and we cannot go. Here is the ultimatum. This is the truth, we say to men, because Jesus knew it, and said it, and lived it.[4]

We have no effective Christian religion except that of which Jesus himself is the center. Speaking of another matter, Professor Harnack says that the only way to maintain a certain position is "by wrenching what the Evangelists tell us off of its hinges."[5] That is what would have to be done if any clear line were drawn between the religion of Jesus and the religion of which he is the center.

Yet of course it is true that Jesus lived his own teaching. He did not expect men to believe anything about him which he did not know to be true. "He leads them to God, not only by what he says, but still more by what he is and does, and ultimately by what he suffers."[6] No one could read the mere sayings of Jesus without being impressed with his tremendous

[4] Henry van Dyke, "The Gospel for an Age of Doubt" (Macmillan, New Edition, 1926), p. 200.

[5] Adolf von Harnack, "What Is Christianity?" (Putnam, New Edition, 1923), p. 113.

[6] Ibid., p. 125.

self-consciousness, his strong sense of personal responsibility, his realization of the meaning of his own presence in the world. We have no evidence whatever that he thought of himself at any time as a simple peasant of Galilee who had found his way to God by dint of searching. Some one has expressed the thought that "Jesus is the best instance thus far in history of one who found God by the path of service of his fellows." Few things could be farther from the facts if we are to trust any record left to us. Jesus never speaks or acts as one who is searching for God by any path. He knew God and did not need to find him. He was not here to plot out a road at whose end God might be found, but to make God known as he already knew him and to bring men to God. Principal Forsyth reminds us that the gospel is not good advice but good news—a statement of reality which changes the whole outlook on life.

This would not mean that Jesus disregarded the great religious ideas that were in the world when he came. Instead, he took them up, transformed them, vitalized them. He gave new content to many words, new applications to many principles, new breadth to many ideas.

> From time to time the ruling ideas of an age pass through a personality great enough to receive and transform and redirect their entire movement, and thereafter they are never the same; they carry on with them one marvelous thing more, namely, what they took from him. . . . So Jesus took the old law, the old ethics, the old understandings of God, and recharged them with reality.[7]

[7] Gaius G. Atkins, "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), pp. 24, 30.

Two Essential Ideas Involved. 1. For Jesus religion involved a way of believing—a way of thinking about God, about man, about the relations between God and man, and about the relations between man and man on that account. Every religion has these elements. Decrying creeds or formal theology does not lessen our need for all that they really stand for. We must let religion appeal to our heads as truly as elsewhere. The record of Jesus shows how clearly he thought about the great objects of religion; following him requires similar thought.

A recent series of religious books has an introductory statement with these words:

> The Editors of this series are convinced that the Christian Church as a whole is confronted with a great though largely silent crisis, and also with an unparalleled opportunity. . . . Nothing less is required than a candid, courageous and well-informed effort to think out anew in the light of modern knowledge the foundation affirmations of our common Christianity.[8]

Professor William Adams Brown[9] shows that creedless religion is unfruitful and that what we believe is important to others as well as to ourselves.

Of course, in so great a matter as religion we cannot reach conclusions that exhaust the things we think about. The words of Jesus require much study, though they have surface meanings that are clear and sufficient for the beginning of the Christian life. When he spoke of God as Father, Luke 11:2, did

[8] "Library of Constructive Theology" (Harpers, 1925 ff.). General Editor, Sir James Marchant.

[9] William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapter I.

he say an entirely easy thing? What is a father? We cannot exhaust the expression. What does "love" mean in the two great Commandments, Matt. 22:37, 39? Every child knows an answer but no sage can express all that the answer should contain. President Pritchett tells that when he was walking in Switzerland he asked a lad, "Where is Kandersteg?" The boy replied, "I don't know exactly where Kandersteg is, but yonder is the road to it." Something of that kind occurs when one thinks about the great things of religion. We do not think out to complete ends; we think in directions toward the final truth. It is so in science and all of life. No creed is ever complete and final, though it may be sound and correct so far as it goes. All we can do is to ask men to go with us so far as we have gone. Jesus made it plain that a man might be different from the rank and file of his followers and yet be among those followers, Luke 9:49, 50.

Professor Harnack thought that all of Jesus' teachings could be grouped under three headings, each of them really containing the whole: (1) the Kingdom of God and its coming; (2) God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul; (3) the higher righteousness and the commandments of love. He himself stands behind everything that he said.[10]

2. For Jesus religion involved also a resultant way of living. Believing and living go together. Somebody has to think out the truth before men can really live by it. But it is hardly worth while in religion to think it out unless it leads to right living. If be-

[10] Adolf von Harnack, "What Is Christianity?" (Putnam, New Edition, 1923), p. 44.

lieving were merely intellectual, it would be inadequate. It is also a matter of the will. Paul speaks of confessing with the mouth but believing in the heart, Rom. 10:8, using the fact often urged in Scripture that out of the heart "are the issues of life," Prov. 4:23. Christianity becomes, then, a way of living, and that is the meaning in the phrase, "Jesus' way of life." It is a way of living not part of life but the whole of it, intellectual as well as practical. The opening section of Carlyle's lecture on "The Hero as a Prophet" is very eloquent on the difference between what one says he believes and what "he verily does believe." By this latter he can be judged; by it his strength is measured; by it his value to the world is determined. Jesus warned us strongly that saying, "Lord, Lord," is no passport to his favor; he requires the doing of the will of God, Matt. 7:21.

This essential way of living is motivated by love—to God and to other men. A verbal creed must become volitional; the words must be accepted by the will. If Jesus himself had not lived what he taught he could not have had such tremendous influence. When he thought of God as his Father, he lived as though it were true. When he saw men as brothers, he lived a steadily brotherly life with all sorts of people. He did not believe in racial lines, and one way we know he did not is that we see him habitually disregarding such lines. He believed that worry is really doubt of the care and love of God, so he did not worry. He believed in forgiveness and to the last he forgave, Luke 23:34.

Jesus believed that right conduct should come out

of right thinking. At the end of Matt., ch. 5, he argues for being generous to enemies, loving them, caring for them, even though they are still enemies. He admits that this is not a common practice and is not according to popular custom. But he reminds us that God does this all the time, sending his rain and sun on all kinds of men with the same love. So, he says, you must do. You know how God acts; then act that way yourselves. That is the meaning of the difficult verse, "Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect": Your heavenly Father is your standard of perfection; be perfect according to that standard, not according to any lower idea. Matt. 5:48. Knowledge of right involves an obligation to apply it to oneself. As the books say, "It is right" means "I ought to do it." Any divorce between thinking and conduct in religion is in so far not Christian. There was none in Jesus or in his teaching.

It is this harmony between belief and conduct that produces and also expresses Christian character. A widely accepted list of the traits of Christian character has been published. It is based on an analysis, first of the character of Jesus, then of all Scripture characters, followed by further studies of outstanding historical instances. The list may well be studied to illustrate how belief and conduct run together. Christian character must include the following traits:

Coöperation	Forgivingness	Humility
Courage	Good Will	Joyousness
Creativeness	Health-minded-	Love
Dependability	ness	Loyalty
Faith	Honesty	Obedience

Open-mindedness	Purity	Self-control
	Purposefulness	Self-respect
Penitence	Reverence	Spirituality [11]

Of course penitence is never found in Jesus, but its place is taken by quick sensitiveness to any offense against God or man and an eager desire to correct evil in the penitent. But could anyone believe in these traits seriously without acting them out, and could one act them out except on the ground of his earnest belief in them?

So intimate are these two essentials of Jesus' religion that it is difficult to know which comes first in experience. A boy may be brought to right thinking by conduct inspired by loyalty to his parents or his group. He may not be motivated by any sound opinion regarding it, yet out of his conduct may develop an opinion which will dominate his after life. A girl may start on the road to fine womanhood by discovering that certain things are frowned upon by the circle which she most admires. She has no opinion on those things independently, but out of conduct on that plane there develops a body of thinking which becomes independent of group support and may even check other group action. Right living, that is, may produce right thinking.

Or the process may move in the other direction. Jesus called men to follow him before he explained fully what it might mean, though he was ready on occasion to set out the terms with disconcerting clearness, Matt. 8:19-22; Luke 21:12-17. But as they fol-

[11] International Council of Religious Education (5 S. Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, 1928).

lowed him, they were led to see more clearly who he really was. Their loyal conduct resulted in clearer thinking, just as clearer thinking tended to make them more loyal. Once in a while in scientific fields we come across a truth which is revolutionary; in its presence we give up a great deal that we had formerly counted true. But most scientific advance consists in unfolding the larger meanings of the things we already know. It is so in religion. As we follow Christ we sometimes see truths about him which upset most of what we have been thinking. But in general our following merely unfolds the convictions with which we started, vague at first but becoming clearer as we go on. No belief has value except as it works out into a way of living, and no way of living is secure unless it proceeds from and helps to produce a way of believing. The only way to save a belief is to apply it; the only way to secure conduct is to give it a basis in conviction.

Four Details of Jesus' Religion. 1. Religion meant to Jesus *assurance of God as Father.* This contains at least these four implications: (*a*) Taking God's will as the law of life; (*b*) trusting him in times of anxiety; (*c*) finding signs of him everywhere; (*d*) being assured of the future in view of his love.

Jesus saved all this from vagueness not only by living as though it were true but by expressing in himself definitely and clearly who God is. What Christian history has meant by the "incarnation," or coming of God into human life, underlies this complete assurance of Jesus about God. When a puzzled disciple asked to have "the Father" shown to him,

Jesus replied that seeing himself was equivalent to seeing the Father, John 14:9. Principal Cairns, of Aberdeen, has said that Christians think of God as an almighty and omnipresent Christ. The traits of divinity which Jesus taught are those which he himself displayed under human limitations.

Of course, then, for the Christian faith God is personal and is concerned with and for humanity as the object of his love. In the Chinese Recorder for May, 1919, Dr. Y. Y. Tsu quotes a Chinese university professor as saying:

> In one thing Christians and Confucianists differ fundamentally. Christians say, "We know that God is personal," whereas we Confucianists say, "We do not know, for we have no way of finding out what God is like." The human intellect is finite; it is vain for us to strive to know the Unknowable. Honor the gods, but let them alone.

Mr. Z. K. Zia replies, "If only Confucius had known God a little better, the history of China would have been wholly different and perhaps much more encouraging."[12] Professor T. C. Chao, of Yenching University, Peking, speaks quite as definitely:

> My personal opinion is that God can be found in clear expression only in the Lord incarnate, our Lord Jesus Christ. The greatest task ahead, it seems to me, is a creation of the direct experience of God through our faith in Christ. The Christian message lies clearly in the definite faith in God as Father, with whom his believing children can have personal communication through the living of a life as exemplified in Jesus, a life of moving and conquering love.

[12] Z. K. Zia, "The Confucian Civilization" (Booklet privately published).

It is clear that Confucius has not given a gospel, a simple yet magnificent gospel, of the love of God the Father who wants us all to be like Christ and to have the most abundant life, that contains in it a wonderful peace and a joy and a contact with everlasting reality.[13]

It is easier to believe this than to live as though it were true, yet of course both these aspects are involved in our religion. Just so far as we trust Christ's character and insight and all that goes to make up his reality, we can be sure of the God whom he reveals and embodies. It might be impossible for a finite intellect to know an infinite or unknowable God, but if God has brought himself near to the mind, in terms that are within its comprehension, then he may be known. The Christian faith is that he has done so in Christ. If the "unknowable" God is really a Father we may be sure that he will find a way of becoming known to those who are his children. Jesus taught this of God and he presented himself as an expression of this spirit. He called men to follow him and trust him in terms which have arrested the minds of men ever since. The declaration of "The Christian Message" by the Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council (April, 1928) says:

In this world, bewildered and groping for its way, Jesus Christ has drawn to himself the attention and admiration of mankind as never before. He stands before men as plainly greater than Western civilization, greater than the Christianity that the world has come to know. . . . Our message is Jesus Christ. He is the revelation of what God is and of what man through him may become. In him we come face to

[13] Report of Jerusalem Conference (International Missionary Council), Vol. I, p. 94.

face with the ultimate reality of the universe; he makes known to us God as our Father, perfect and infinite in love and in righteousness, for in him we find God incarnate, the final, yet ever-unfolding revelation of the God in whom we live and move and have our being.

2. Religion meant to Jesus *a worthy attitude toward men.* This idea contains some implications: (*a*) that men need help at many points, especially to correct their estrangement from God by sin; (*b*) that they are worthy of the best one can give, Jesus himself being an illustration of God's thought of men at this point; (*c*) that men are always objects of God's love and care; (*d*) that they are capable of a great brotherhood of love under the guidance of God—the Kingdom of God on earth. No religious leader ever took higher ground regarding the value and worth of humanity than did Jesus, and no religion has ever been committed to a higher estimate of man than is Christianity. The teaching rests on the assurance that man is made "in the image of God," and that God can be spoken of as "Father" even though because of their rejection of his love men cannot always be spoken of as "sons." But any cynical contempt for humanity, any dismissal of men as unworthy of regard, is far away from the spirit of Jesus.

When the poet, Francis Thompson, was found in distress in the streets of London, he was asked by a Christian worker whether his soul was saved. Thompson was indignant, saying, "What right have you to ask that question?"[14] Have we the right to care about our fellows? Or is it an impertinence? Is it

[14] Everard Meynell, "Life of Francis Thompson" (Scribners, 1928), p. 70.

our business because it is God's business? Or is it nobody's business but that of the man himself? How far was Jesus' coming to the world to help men an impertinence? The new friend of Thompson said to him at once, "If you won't let me save your soul, let me save your body." Thompson allowed him to provide shelter and food without sacrifice of his dignity or human rights. Was this consistent? Allowing for lack of tact and the unwisdom of asking a hungry, homeless man first about his soul, was not the question an unavoidable corollary of the Christian faith and its challenge to brotherhood? After his own conversion General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, said, "I wanted to be right with God; I wanted to be right in myself; I wanted a life spent in putting other people right."[15] Does not the Christian faith introduce a real problem in its demand that we try to help men wherever it is possible? How can we escape being meddlesome and annoying in such efforts? Jesus sometimes left situations where his purposes were misinterpreted, Matt. 12:15; Mark 5:17, 18; Luke 4:30; John 10:39, 40. He refused any use of exceptional power to silence objection to himself or to deaden suspicion that he might be interfering with personal rights. Zeal to help and regard for personal independence sometimes collide. Neither can be omitted in loyalty to Jesus.

3. Religion meant to Jesus *devotion of life* (*a*) to the will and purpose of God; (*b*) to the need and fellowship of men. This was the heart of his own

[15] Harold Begbie, "Life of General William Booth" (Macmillan, 1920), Vol. I, p. 47.

religious life. Put John 8:29b with Mark 10:45 and note their teaching of Jesus' outlook on duty. Recall the temptation experience at the beginning of his ministry and the Gethsemane experience at the end of it, in both of which Jesus committed himself to the will and purpose of God for the service of men. In any issue, he was definitely on God's side, which was always the side of true human interest.

In the great struggle raging at the moment between the forces of good and evil, Jesus was acutely conscious of taking sides with God and humanity. He stood wholly on the side of good and yet remained in close contact with the present evil world. To live religiously was to be an ardent participator in the conflict.[16]

He left to his disciples an errand for the whole world, Matt. 28:19, 20. He expressed in his own person the fullness of this devotion. His religion becomes for us, therefore, devotion to Christ, because in this devotion we are most fully committed to the will of God and the service of men. One of the parables tells us that service rendered to needy men is really service to Christ, Matt. 25:31-46.

Hence the Christian religion is one of obedience. Mrs. Haviland has pointed out that the former fear of "obedience" as a principle of life is much reduced and that place is now found for the actual yielding of life to a higher will than one's own.

We have swung away from the extreme "self-expression" back to a sane ideal of obedience. Education and psychology have now swung around the full circle and to-day it is those who pooh-pooh obedience

[16] Shirley J. Case, "Jesus; A New Biography" (University of Chicago Press, 1927), p. 380.

who are behind the times. Every mental-hygiene expert, every child-guidance clinic warns us that lack of sympathetic but firm training in obedience in childhood is the sure road to disaster later in life.[17]

Life never outgrows the necessity for obedience, but in later life it becomes voluntary devotion, a vision of need, a longing for fellowship, a recognition of the good will of God in which is our peace. But that is an essential phase of the religion of Jesus. He spoke of it several times in terms of a cross which must be taken up and borne if one means to follow him, Mark 8:34. The context shows that he was setting the gains of the world over against the cost of helpful service. He said that anyone who chose the gains instead of the cost would not be "worthy" to be his disciple; it would make his life cheap and unworthy.

4. Religion meant to Jesus *the correction of life* in anything that prevents this assurance of God as Father, this worthy attitude toward men, and this devotion to the will of God and the good of men. No man can know himself and his friends without realizing that something needs to be done to change human life to make it fit in with Jesus' idea of living. There is no sign of this sense of need in Jesus himself, but his disciples very early came to feel that he carried with him the secret of religion which their own lives needed. So they called him Saviour, a name which has been specially regarded among believers since their day. While he did not need spiritual saving, or forgiveness of sin and unworthi-

[17] Mary S. Haviland, "A Study of Babyhood" (The Westminster Press, 1927), p. 46.

ness, he brought salvation, forgiveness, and correction to others. He said that he had come "to give his life a ransom for many," Mark 10:45, and that his blood was poured out for many for remission of sins, Matt. 26:28—both of them baffling expressions, but showing his purpose to do whatever was needed to release men from sin and its bondage.

> Among the possible brief phrases in which the essence of Christianity might fairly be summed up, one certainly would be: I believe in God who forgives sins through Jesus Christ. . . . No man can properly rank as a Christian, in the sense of the New Testament, who has not received the forgiveness of sins, or who is not conscious that through its impartation something has happened of decisive moment for his relation to God.[18]

But the experience of being forgiven differs greatly among men, and it cannot be said that all must experience it alike in order to have the religion of Jesus. All that is sure is that men who follow him do find themselves at peace, although they know that they have sinned, and that it is somehow because of Christ. How it is accomplished is not so important to us as is the fact itself. It completes the Christian idea of religion.[19]

Whatever "religion" may mean in itself, therefore, the religion of Jesus means assurance of God as a Father who can be trusted with all our sins and weaknesses, our needs and desires, a sense of other men as deserving the best we can give them and as

[18] Hugh R. Mackintosh, "The Christian Experience of Forgiveness" (Harpers, 1927), pp. 1, 2.

[19] William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapter V.

worthy of our closest fellowship; and a devotion of our lives to the will of God and the need of men. It has personal and social aspects which must concern us in the following studies.

Further Suggested Reading

William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapters I, IV, V.
Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), Chapter II.
William P. Paterson, "The Nature of Religion" (Doran, 1925), Chapters V, VI, XIII.
Adolf von Harnack, "What Is Christianity?" (Putnam, New Edition, 1923), Part I.
Gaius G. Atkins, "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), Chapter I.
Herbert M. Diamond, "Religion and the Commonweal" (Harpers, 1928).

Note: All books are to be read intelligently. It is not to be assumed that everything that manages to get into print is thereby assured to be true, nor that all the passing opinions of good men are as good as the men are. The only book to be unqualifiedly recommended is the Bible and we have to be reasonable in reading even that. Effort has been made to keep the bibliography brief enough to be practicable, and no one reference, nor all of them together, can be expected to cover the whole of the study. If any other one book had said just what this book tries to say, this book would probably not have been written. But something conflicting with or confirming some of the material of this book will be found in each of the references. The current footnote references are to be noted as well.

Suggestions for Study II

Take a few moments to review the main points of Study I.

Notice that this study and the next two discuss the two natural phases of the Christian religion—its personal and its social aspects. Are they ever experienced independently? Think out the relation between them. Estimate the Japanese incident; does it represent anything in your own experience? If not, why have you never felt it? If so, how did you counteract it? Which phase, personal or social, is more important for religion? Which is of larger concern to the Church? Which is more influential on the other?

The material can be handled on the outline of the text:

1. Personal relation to God accented by the Christian religion. Look up all the Scripture references. The experience of Dr. Stanley Jones. Value of the Christian idea of the "new birth."

2. Personal relation to the past a duty—loyal, yet free. Value of the historical aspect of Christianity; its possible abuses.

3. Personal spirit more vital than external regulation. Method of John the Baptist. Olive Schreiner.

4. Personal sacrifice inherent in Christian living. The Lord's Supper as illustration. The lesson of salt and light.

5. Personal danger risk inevitable. Jesus' practice in receiving disciples; the references. Value and danger of "the revolt of youth."

6. Personal fellowship with Christ needed. Sharing his peace and assurance, escaping pessimism. Dr. Frank's expression. Estimate the case of Rabbi Yechiel from the Christian point of view.

Can you add, from experience or observation, any other personal aspects of the Christian religion? Where would you put the experience of comfort in sorrow? inspiration to heroic endeavor? forgiving when wronged? experience of being forgiven after sin?

Notebook: Write from your own observation or from inquiries in your own group some description 1. of the value of the church to the religious lives of individual people, and 2. of the service of individuals to the church. If you have any friends who count themselves Christians but are not in any Church fellowship, tell what, if any, effect that lack seems to have on their lives. The note should bring out the connection between the personal and the social aspects of our faith.

STUDY II

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AS A WAY OF PERSONAL LIVING

Distinction between the personal and the social aspects of religion must not be pressed too far. Our word "individual" means an undivided reality—the ultimate unit of the human order. Yet no such unit is possible by itself. A human being cannot even enter existence except in a social circle of at least three—his father, his mother, and himself. Nor can he continue unless an even larger circle is maintained through which his wants can be supplied. The richer this social environment is, both in persons and privileges, the better opportunity his life has for development. The form of personality that develops is connected with the group in which the individual is.

In an interesting discussion of the individual and society, Professor Faris says, "It is much too simple to say that the individual and society are one, for it is difficult to know which one." He notes how often the individual stands out against society. Heretics, rebels, martyrs, criminals—all these are not at one with society. So the great decisions are personal and individual, whatever the pressure from the group. "When the mother says, 'Come into the house,' and

Romeo whispers, 'Come out on to the balcony,' it is Romeo who prevails, but it is Juliet who decides."[1]

Religion has a heavy stake in this matter, whether it concerns itself primarily with the individual or with society. For, as there can be no individuals apart from the social group, so there can be no society apart from individuals. One of the early acts of Christ was to secure a group of individuals with whom he could start the social movement represented in the Christian Church to-day. Mastering those personal lives was a large part of his work. Yet it is clear that he had a social program in mind for them.

The individual often seems petty and deserted in the midst of the social or earthly order in which he lives. A few years ago an eighteen-year-old Japanese threw himself into a cascade near Nikko, leaving these lines:

> Alas! the vastness of the universe overwhelms me!
> Alas! how illimitable is time!
> Dwarf that I am—five feet of manhood only, I would embrace all this immensity!
> What value or authority has the philosophy of Horace when finally summed up?
> The real nature of the universe can only be expressed in one word—incomprehensible!
> Pierced by these thoughts, as if by a sword of anguish, I have at last resolved to die and already as I stand high on the rocks ready to take the plunge, my heart knows peace for the first time. For the first time I understand that the extreme limit of despair coincides with the extreme limit of felicity.[2]

[1] Ernest W. Burgess, "The Urban Community" (University of Chicago Press, 1926), p. 36.

[2] Abel Bonnard, "In China" (Dutton, 1927), p. 352.

This is in sharp contrast with the religion of Jesus. The universe is the creation of One who can be called Father, whose love reaches even to birds and flowers and much more to every individual, Matt. 6:25, 26. Life is worth living for the service it can render to human need. Casting it away violates the Christian spirit. If Jesus isolated an individual from his fellows, it was always to make him more sensitive to God, Matt. 6:6.

In Disraeli's "Coningsby," Sidonia, a mysterious stranger, is urging faith in individual men of genius as the hope of society. Coningsby asks, "But what is an individual against the vast public opinion?" "Divine," answers Sidonia. "God made man in his own image but the public is made by newspapers, members of Parliament, excise officers, poor-law guardians." Sometimes this seems an accurate distinction, but only sometimes. For generally we realize that the public is merely a large number of individuals more or less released from their sense of personal accountability but likely at any moment to recover it and to stand for right and truth.

Meanwhile any religion must be prepared to support an individual who may need to stand against society. It must assert the value of personality. This is one of the glories of the religion of Jesus: it is a "champion of personality."[3] Jesus illustrated in several parables, notably the three in Luke, ch. 15, how dear in God's sight are the individuals who make up the mass; whether it is one in a hundred or one in ten, or one in two, the one is of concern to

[3] Reinhold Niebuhr, "Does Civilization Need Religion?" (Macmillan, 1927), p. 4.

God. Attention has recently been called to a change in biographical method:

> Questions of success and responsibility have been shifted from the environment back to the individual, so that the analysis which was formerly expended upon the *milieu* now seeks to penetrate within it. The problem of the biographer is the discovery of a human soul. A method now current in the universities discusses the genius in terms of his work, whereas a modern biographer reveals the work in his personality.[4]

There is always need for this return to the individual, for making religion a personal experience and not merely a social program.

> Said a missionary [in Africa] to an old chief: "Won't you all enter the New Path together, you and your people?" "Teacher," came the old man's answer, "that is not fitting for your Word; you need *umue, umue* (one by one, one by one)." The old village elder has recognized the emphasis Christianity places on the individual.[5]

Consider whether there is not a danger of group movements in the Sunday School or elsewhere, when the members of an entire class or club unite with the Church. How can we draw the line between a mass movement which leaves an individual unmoved and a movement which really moves the individuals of the mass?

Many of the finest results of the Christian faith are available for the individual without special reference

[4] Emil Ludwig, "Genius and Character" (Harcourt, 1927), pp. 4, 9.

[5] J. T. Tucker, "Drums in the Darkness" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 201.

to the group in which he is involved. Dr. Samuel Johnson held that individual happiness or unhappiness, and still more individual sin and salvation, remain about the same under any and all governments. Certainly love of righteousness, peace of conscience, desire for holiness, hatred of sin, can have power in one's life no matter what the surroundings are. They are not so apt to exist in bad environment, but they can occur there. The individual has at least some control over his environment. Jesus did not tell men to do as well as they could under all the circumstances but called them at once to apply the standards of the Father in heaven, Matt. 6:28.

It is scarcely open to question that Jesus' object in preaching the Kingdom was to illumine men's minds concerning their relationship with God and to lead them to accept his rightful rule over their lives.[6]

Jesus called men to personal allegiance, no matter what might be their habitual group. People in non-Christian lands assume that everybody from Christian lands is a Christian, whereas in any Christian land it is understood that one becomes a Christian by personal acceptance of the faith and that he may refuse to do so. The Christian faith does not advance through numbers, unless the numbers are actually changed individuals. Jesus was strangely ready to turn men away when they came on the wrong footing, though he was seeking followers all the while. A Christian church must receive members constantly or it will die, but it must sometimes choose between

[6] Andrew C. Zenos, "The Plastic Age of the Gospel" (Macmillan, 1927), p. 49.

the mass and the individual and its choice then reveals whether or not it has caught the spirit of Christ.

An analysis of the teaching of Jesus reveals six details in this personal aspect of his religion.

1. Direct Relation to God. The Christian religion asserts the possibility of a direct relation of the individual to God. This is the converse of the direct relation of God to each individual. Jesus argued that anxiety about obvious necessities is inexcusable in one who believes in God as Father, Matt. 6:25-32. There is an arresting minuteness in the word about the hairs of the head being numbered, Matt. 10:30. After declaring God's watchfulness of sparrows, Jesus said that men are of much more value to God than many sparrows, Matt. 10:31. Hindu teaching equalizes all living things before God. It is not so with Jesus. All living things, indeed all things whatever, have value to God, but they are not on a plane with men. Men are in a class by themselves, of more value than things or animals.

Since God holds this close relation to men, they can hold direct relation to him. Dr. E. Stanley Jones noted in his round-table discussions in India that adherents of other faiths spoke of their eager search for God, hoping as the far outcome of their quest that they might find him, whereas the Christian members of the group spoke as though they had already found him. The peace the others looked for as a consummation of life these had found as the initiative of life.[7] Sometimes this is called mystical as though it were an insight granted to a limited few. But this

[7] E. Stanley Jones, "Christ at the Round Table" (Abingdon Press, 1928), Chapter IX.

is open to all men, each in his own way. There are experts in religion as in all human experiences, but the idea can be carried too far. Dr. T. R. Glover says that we must often depend on experts but that it ought not to be so in religion.

Why not be an expert, yourself, in religion? A life lived experimentally in the love of God, based on Christ, does not depend very much on the authorship of Deuteronomy; and you can learn a lot about it from The Epistle to the Hebrews, whoever wrote it.[8]

The critical questions in the theory of religion do not bear heavily on the practical matters. Many problems can remain unsolved without lessening the intimacy of relation with God.

Christian thinking provides for institutions and agencies, but these cannot take the place of this personal relation to God. At Nanking in January, 1928, the chief of the Central Political Bureau (Kuomintang) said:

The Nationalist party has committed a grave error in denying religion. A people cannot stand without moral character. The purpose of the Y. M. C. A. [in whose interest he was speaking] is to develop Christian character. Therefore we should do anything in our power to maintain an institution of this kind.[9]

The transition from the Jewish accent on national and racial relationships to the Christian accent on the individual and his relation to God was what baffled Nicodemus, John 3:3-10. It is equally baffling to many others. They think of God as necessarily remote and inaccessible. But there could be no question

[8] The London Daily News, February, 1928.
[9] Chinese Recorder, February, 1928, p. 71.

about Jesus' thought of God as both personal and intimately related to men. This close relation is open to everybody because of the possibility of what he describes as a new birth, John 3:3. Nobody could ever be so bad or so defective that he could not be born again. If he had to be reconstructed, there might be fear whether the life had not been too much damaged to permit it. But no house ever fell down so badly that its wreck could not be cleared away and another built in its place. Even Paul could speak of himself as a new creation, for whom old things are passed away and all things become new, II Cor. 5:17.

Part of the duty of teachers of religion is to help students into this closer relation to God. It cannot be done by proxy and no one can tell another how it is accomplished if he has no experience of it himself, but the teaching process is meant to secure this response among the students. The founders of Princeton Theological Seminary (1811) spoke earnestly of "devotion and improvement in practical piety," but they warned each student that "he must remember, too, that this is a species of improvement which must of necessity be left in a great measure with himself, as a concern between God and his own soul." In a test paper recently a student in another institution replied to a question about the person of Jesus: "I do not need to ask who Christ is; I know." Does this attitude seem to you justifiable and desirable?

2. Relation to the Past—Loyalty and Liberty. The Christian religion connects personal religion with the past, yet frees it from bondage to the past. It is an outgrowth of Judaism, yet it breaks with Judaism at many points. Dr. Klausner protests against the

idea that Paul or the apostles were the real founders of Christianity, saying that if Jesus had been merely a reformed or a reforming Jew there could have resulted no such system as Christianity.[10] Jesus' method is sharply presented in Matt., ch. 5, where five times over he uses the phrase: "Ye have heard . . . but I say." He told a healed leper to go to the Temple and do as Moses had commanded, Matt. 8:4. On the Sabbath issue he was not making a new ruling but calling his hearers back to the real purpose of the day, Matt. 12:1-8. He warned against trying to put new wine into old bottles, Matt. 9:17, yet he compared his disciples to a householder who brings out of his treasures things both old and new, Matt. 13:52.

Perhaps nowhere does Jesus' attitude toward the past appear more selective and free than in the temptation story, Luke 4:1-12. Here past is set against past, text against text, quotation against quotation. A verse is not to be accepted until it is fairly understood and interpreted. Jesus claimed the right to the final word, judging all by the standard of his own mission. The woman at the well, John 4:7-14, exclaimed over the idea that Jesus could be "greater than our father Jacob," but Jesus replied that at least his gifts are greater, for they are enduring and final while Jacob's were not. In Jesus' teaching appears no contempt for the past but a free judgment of it and a claim of liberty in following the leadership of God for a new day. He told his disciples at the end that the Holy Spirit would be their guide into all

[10] Joseph Klausner, "Jesus of Nazareth" (Macmillan, 1925), pp. 9, 63f, 371, 413.

the truth and that he would abide with them for that purpose to the end, John 14:16, 26; 16:13.

Christianity has a great asset in its historical quality, but it involves a serious problem. How can the past be honored without becoming a handicap and a hindrance to advancement? If believers are fearful or hesitant regarding new truth because it differs from the past, then history becomes a drag on Christianity. On the other hand, the faith loses if its adherents do not take account of the experiences of earlier men who found in it the same values and inspirations which we need to-day.

The problem is not simple. We have to recognize the "social lag,"[11] the state of mind which needs the strong hand of experience to keep the social group in motion toward the future. Youth is not always eagerly reaching forward. Good movements may be delayed because they have become a habit of mind and have lost their quality of urgency. Do you yourself tend to support the same agencies for human good which your parents supported or are you more concerned with new agencies, movements of your own times, even though the old needs are as clear to-day as ever? New constituencies have to be developed constantly for old agencies, or they fail. This suggests the value of the past, the impulsion of experience.

On the other hand, when the past becomes a controlling force, the damage is even worse. Liberty is essential to Christian progress. When adventurous souls are restrained lest they overturn some cherished idea or program, the future is mortgaged. Older peo-

[11] James Harvey Robinson, "The Humanizing of Knowledge" (Doran, 1926).

ple seldom realize that each generation comes fresh on the scene and that what is familiar in experience may not be familiar without experience and hence loses something of its sanctity.

The group does not create personality; it makes the development of personality possible through the interaction of itself with the new candidate born into its life. And personality is creative, self-directive, initiative. It rests in turn upon the group, challenging its life. This continual interaction makes the possibility of social progress.[12]

How far does Christianity warrant a new believer in breaking with the past and in making new ventures either in faith or in practice? How shall a teacher be of largest help to his students—in making the past vivid and commanding or in making the future challenging and alluring, or in both? Is loyalty or liberty more important?

3. Spirit or Regulation of Life? The Christian religion expresses a spirit of life rather than a series of regulative principles. External religion tends always to exaggerate details of conduct. "The tradition of the elders" was several times a barrier to Jesus, Matt. 15:1, 2. He warned against doing things to "be seen of men," though the same things might be done secretly, Matt. 6:1, 16. When he was asked, after the manner of rabbis, to declare his scale of laws, he named two as first and second, both of them (the laws of love) entirely in the field of the spirit, leaving details to be determined hour by hour, Matt. 22:37-39. Whereas many teachers of his day accented

[12] Theodore G. Soares, "Religious Education" (University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. 19.

external conduct, he declared that the springs of morality are within the life, Matt. 15: 19, 20. For Jesus it is the heart that determines character. When the publican smote on his breast and prayed God to be merciful to him, naming no such merits as were doubtless true of the Pharisee, Jesus said that he was justified more certainly than was the Pharisee, Luke 18: 9-14.

Note a contrast between Jesus' method and that of John the Baptist. The forerunner laid down specific lines of duty for different groups as they called for guidance, Luke 3: 10-14. Jesus was much less detailed. When a man once asked him to interfere in a family dispute, he refused, but immediately he added a principle of the inner life that would have prevented the dispute in the first place, Luke 12: 13-15. A very thoughtful writer says:

> Moses has a law; Confucius has a system; the Stoic has a philosophy. Christ, instead of a code, gives an ideal; instead of rules, a life; instead of a philosophy, an art. Christ conceived conduct as the art of life. . . . If Christ had legislated, inevitably any legislation that was suitable for life in Palestine in the first century A.D. would have been obsolete in fifty years. Mohammed did legislate; and for his people, his own age, he legislated well, and just because his laws were so well adapted to his own time they are obsolete now.[13]

An eminent American business man wrote to a friend: "The Bible doesn't tell us specifically what we must do. I sometimes wish it did. It would make life so

[13] Canon Burnett H. Streeter and others, "Adventure; the Faith of Science and the Science of Faith" (Macmillan, 1928), pp. 66, 68.

much simpler. But no doubt it is a good thing it doesn't. We are all of us compelled to think things out for ourselves."

This does not make Christianity a perfectly simple thing; it merely puts its demands primarily in the inner life and only secondarily in the outer. When Olive Schreiner was still a small child she read for the first time the Sermon on the Mount and ran to her mother in high emotion, saying: "Look what I have found! It's what I have known all along. Now we can live like that!" But it is not so simple as that. Here is an issue which goes far below the surface of conduct, down to where its springs are. As Professor Simkhovitch has said, "Use all your modern little scientific standards, and you cannot get away from the fact that Christ's insight was one which future generations may rediscover but can never upset." Jesus flung his followers out into life, not with a set of regulations prepared for each emergency but with a spirit and attitude toward life, letting them learn in every emergency just what details of conduct are worthiest of their spirit. He gives "a spirit for every occasion, a guiding light for every untrodden road."

Teachers of religion hesitate to run the same adventurous risk with those committed to their care. It seems far simpler and safer to catalogue the duties of life in codes and systems with ample "Thou shalts" and "Thou shalt nots." But it is of the very essence of the Christian religion to trust its adherents with a spirit of life—the spirit of love, running upward toward God and outward toward men, assured that this spirit will make its own codes and

regulations. The one insistent demand is for sincerity with oneself. There must be no double standard —one for our teaching and another for our practice, a rule that forbids a mote in another's eye but permits a beam in our own eye, Luke 6:41, 42. Nor are we allowed to use our defects to excuse our service for others. We are to correct them, casting out our beam, so that we can be worthy helpers. That is the spirit of life to which we are committed as believers.

4. A Program of Sacrificial Service. The Christian religion provides a wide program for sacrificial service. Long before his own cross Jesus put his call in terms of cross-bearing, Matt. 10:38. In Luke 9:23 is added the note of habitude in this experience—"daily." When John the Baptist asked proof of his Messiahship, his answer was merely a recital of the helpful services he was rendering, Matt. 11:4, 5; if these would not prove it nothing would. When two of the disciples offered themselves for high places, and again when all the disciples discussed how they could be great, Jesus told them they must find an antidote for any such ambitions in the lowliest service of others, Matt. 20:25-28. The outstanding argument he used was his own case; he had come into the world "not to be ministered unto, but to minister"—not to be served but to serve. In one of the best-known parables, Matt. 25:31-46, he rested the judgment on attitude toward need, adding that he himself is so involved in human need that serving it is serving himself—a most bewildering idea to his hearers. He had no room in his scheme for pride of place or for strident claims of self-importance. The main ceremony of the Chris-

tian faith is a reminder of sacrificial service, a body broken, blood shed, for the help of others.

Jesus made this personal as well as corporate. What he required is possible for any single man, whether the group attempts it or not. Men are to mingle with the world at the point of its need and their own greatest danger. Salt cannot hide away in order not to lose its "savor"; light cannot rest under a bushel so that the wind may not extinguish it. Each must accept the risk of its task. Christians must go where the danger is—not danger of injury to their natural lives but danger of being despiritualized and chilled in their devotion. Monasticism failed here, even with its devoted spirits and its many contributions to the history of the faith. It has been rightly said that "for the world's hopeless sin and misery Bernard [of Clairvaux] has but one cure—better monasteries and more of them."

The medieval Benedictines made this supreme mistake: they shut their eyes to the fact that to imitate Christ most directly, his disciples must needs move and mix daily among the unsaved in the common business of life. There is no hint of any cloistered Christianity in the New Testament.[14]

The most serious questions of the Christian faith are not intellectual but essentially practical. They involve matters of daily duty. Where and how to express at its best the faith which we profess is more of a problem than the details of that faith itself. It is much easier to discuss the historical cross of our Lord than to accept graciously the daily cross which each of us must bear.

[14] Frank Ballard, "Twentieth Century Christianity" (T. and T. Clark, 1927), p. 54.

5. The Element of Danger Risk. The Christian religion frankly includes a large element of danger risk. It does not pretend to be an easy religion. Browning's familiar line says that it is "hard to be a Christian—hard for you and me." On several occasions Jesus deliberately threw down the gauntlet of hardship to inquiring disciples. He told one promising inquirer that if he followed him he might not know where he would rest the next night, Matt. 8:20, and refused in another case to allow personal and family interests to be put above the duty of following, Matt. 8:22; while the rich young ruler, whom he loved, went away sorrowing over an imperious demand for a hard program, Matt. 19:21, 22. He warned his disciples that they would be like sheep in the midst of wolves, Matt. 10:16. Jesus clearly wanted disciples; he made loud call for them; but he did not want them on any mistaken terms. If they were not ready for hardship and danger, they could not carry out his program.

This makes dismay illogical when workers are endangered in mission lands. What did we expect of a faith whose Founder was crucified? The widow of a murdered missionary said that such experiences show all the more clearly that the Christian gospel is needed. If the Christian faith were turned back by peril, it would never have started in the first place, and there has been abundant occasion for it to be withdrawn. But this danger risk lies in the very nature of the faith, which is in a world with hostile elements, though no religion fits more readily into the needs of the world.

We write easily of the revolutionary nature of Christianity, but we seldom have in mind the cost of revolution.[15] The prophets, calling for social correction, were not accepted as heroes nor welcomed for their message, Matt. 23:37. A recent writer, commenting on the plea that ministers should be "prophets," reminds us that no man would ever willingly be a "prophet" in the historical sense, but only under duress of the will of God, because prophets have always had rough going, running against the current of their day. But that is what Christians are expected to do on any occasion. They are not trouble makers, but they are not easy-going conformists. Many of us are less troubled over the "revolt of youth" than over the certainty that this "revolt" will be ended as youth passes and the "rebels" will all too soon be peaceful conformists. If the revolt of youth should be centered on the elements in the existing order which are not Christian it might prove the salvation of society. This involves risk and danger but it is a price which Christ called his disciples to pay.

Somewhere between two extremes every teacher of Christianity must find his way: he must make it no impossible faith, and he must make it no easy faith. Manufactured hardships are not Christian. Jesus saw no merit in "fasting" for its own sake, Matt. 9:15. He refused to run into unnecessary danger, Matt. 14:13. Yet his whole manner indicated that he was ready for any real demand of God's will and, when the time came, he set his face toward Jerusalem knowing

[15] Samuel Dickey's "The Constructive Revolution of Jesus" (Doran, 1923) is a fine exception here.

that he was going straight to his death, John 11:7, 8. Prospective followers must realize that following Christ is always possible but often difficult. There may be family difficulties, Matt. 10:35-37, or personal sacrifices, Matt. 18:7-9, or popular dislike, Mark 13:13, or even death, John 16:2, but there is also deep joy and peace, John 14:27; 15:11; 16:22.

6. **Fellowship with Christ.** The Christian religion brings men into fellowship with Christ and so lets them share his peace and assurance. This is the distinctive experience of Christians among other religionists. The familiar "royal invitation" of Matt. 11:28-30 is really a call to share the experience and the strength of Christ. His parting promise was one of continued fellowship, Matt. 28:20b. Christian believers find him more than a Guide to the right life; he is also a Companion in it.

And this brings a share in his peace and assurance. As Dr. Robert Worth Frank once pointed out,

> Jesus had more occasion than Thomas Hardy to be a cynic and to accent the accidents that wreck men and plans. Yet in spite of the tragic frustrations which would have poisoned or broken the spirit of a weakly organized individual, his message remained from the beginning of his life even through its dark finale in essence one of good tidings. His message differs from the stern warnings of the prophets as wedding songs differ from a funeral dirge. He was, at the same time, no proclaimer of smooth sayings. Some things he did not believe in; some people and some methods he denounced sharply. He was not "an incorrigible optimist," as some use the term. He knew well what Stevenson declared, that "sooner or later we all sit down to the banquet of conse-

quences." He was no spiritual Pollyanna. But he was always a bringer of good news, a messenger of true hope.

Jesus did not draw this inspiration from his environment. Dr. Fosdick's observations, recorded in his "Pilgrimage to Palestine," led him to say that "you cannot explain Christ by his environment; his secret runs far back into the abysmal depths of personality."[16] No great soul lives on the material fed to it by its immediate surroundings. Christ comes to all his followers as a Source of strength, always available, always new for each emergency.

On March 11, 1928, there died at Warsaw Rabbi Meier Yechiel, an ascetic scholar of Judaism, who lived by the theory that "life on this earth is given not to be enjoyed." At thirty he made the vow to spend his days and nights in study and prayer and to abstain from eating every day except Saturdays, when it is a religious commandment to eat. Six days each week he fasted; he slept each night in his full clothing so that he might not enjoy his sleep; he wrote several books which he forbade his friends to publish during his lifetime lest they should bring him fame; for his synagogue services he refused all payment, maintaining himself by a small school in which he taught the laws of asceticism. He died at seventy-four. For any such life thoughtful men must have profound respect, though it could not be put on a Christian basis. Nothing in the faith of Christ would encourage such an attitude toward life.

[16] Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Pilgrimage to Palestine" (Macmillan, 1927).

Yet the contrary life of indulgence and ease is equally repulsive to it.

The element of joy enters the Christian religion here. Conditions of trouble or distress do not strike deep enough in life to stop its current. Christian believers are connected with an enterprise which cannot be defeated in the long run because it is part of the program of a Father whose control of the world has not been surrendered. Mr. Blatchford, the British anti-Christian, speaks of the Christian gospel as "but the baseless shadow of a wistful human dream." Could anything be farther from the Christian attitude toward life? Against any such sense of defeat and worthlessness the Christian faith sets a buoyant assurance of God and a fellowship with Christ that lets its adherents share the joy and peace which Christ so obviously held. Yet every teacher should realize that this element in the Chrisiant faith can be missed.

Further Suggested Reading

E. Stanley Jones, "Christ at the Round Table" (Abingdon Press, 1928), Chapter IX.

Canon Burnett H. Streeter and Others, "Adventure; the Faith of Science and the Science of Faith" (Macmillan, 1928), Chapter III.

Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), Chapter III.

Henry Nelson Wieman, "Methods of Private Religious Living" (Macmillan, 1928), Chapters I, II, VIII.

William James, "Varieties of Religious Experience" (Longmans, New Edition, 1928), Lectures IV-VIII.

Harold Begbie, "Twice-Born Men" (Revell, 1909).

William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapter II.

Suggestions for Study III

Connect this study with the next; both deal with the Kingdom of God as the goal of the Christian religion on the social side. Do you agree that this side cannot be considered entirely apart from the personal side?

What definition of the Kingdom of God seems to you most nearly satisfactory? What is the place of the idea in the teaching of Jesus? Do the young people of your circle have such feelings as those expressed in the English paper and by Dr. Niebuhr? If not, how do they feel about the Church as a social force?

Are we really accurate in thinking of Jesus as social-minded? How does his method differ from that of most social movements?

Four items of the Kingdom as a social and political fact:

1. The Kingdom requires the correction of any conditions that prevent human good and growth. Three classes of such conditions:

   a. Environmental, as in the parable of the Sower;

   b. Personal and social, as in the parable of the Tares and the Talents;

   c. Physical, as in the conditions corrected by the miracles. What evils would you name, besides those listed, as hinder human good and so requiring correction? Do any of the evils seem to you unavoidable and uncorrectable?

1. The Kingdom makes fairness and brotherhood the final tests in social and political relationships. What was the sin of the rich man in Jesus' story about the rich man and Lazarus? What is the deep evil of war?

3. The Kingdom requires loyal support of the institutions of society and government. Discuss the quoted charge against Protestantism. Is there anything in the social program of your church or your religious group that lessens loyalty to the Government?

4. The Kingdom surpasses all particular races and governments. How does the life of Jesus illustrate this? Discuss the relation between nationalism and internationalism. Which is more popular just now in your own circle?

Notebook: Write a brief statement of the social conditions in your own community which would be changed if the Kingdom of God were really produced there in power. Include the whole community life which the Kingdom might affect. As you review this statement, does the Kingdom seem to be gaining in your community?

STUDY III

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AS A SOCIAL FORCE: THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND ITS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The individual and the social aspects of the Christian faith run into each other at many points. Its individual aspect covers helpful ministries wrought for any man in need; its social aspect covers all the ministry whereby a hurtful social condition is corrected or a helpful condition is strengthened. In one case a result is overcome; in the other a cause is changed. A man may live a right life in adverse surroundings but he may also work to make his surroundings suitable for such a life. He need not wait until the surroundings are made right before he sets himself to live as he should, but he must not be indifferent to the conditions that make good living difficult, when he might change those conditions. The physical motto has long been, "A sound mind in a sound body"; the religious motto has become, "A saved life in a saved environment."

This new and right order for human life is stated in the familiar phrase of Jesus, "The Kingdom of God." He did not originate the expression but most of its present meaning comes from him. He transformed it into a universal idea.

In its shortest description the Kingdom of God means the rule of God in the hearts and lives of men; in their hearts—that is, personal; in their lives —that is, social.[1] There are many fuller statements:

By the Kingdom of God we mean that society of redeemed personalities of which Christ is at once the Ideal and the Mediator, the union of whose members one with another and with God in the community of holy love, progressively realized in history, constitutes the end for which the world exists.[2]

The Kingdom of God is God's sovereignty in human society, in all realms of human interest or activity.[3]

The Kingdom of God is the term which Jesus uses to describe what will happen when God's ideal for men is completely realized. It is the new social order which will be introduced when God's will is done on earth as it is done in heaven. . . . Whether it comes soon or late, by sudden crisis or through slow development, the Kingdom of God will be a society in which men and women live as the children of God should live.[4]

The theme of the World's Tenth Sunday School Convention at Los Angeles, 1928, was "Thy Kingdom Come." Bishop Fisher described the Kingdom of God as meaning a Christlike world, which he defined as a world educated, prosperous, healthful, ethical, and spiritual. The Convention considered it a suffi-

[1] Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), pp. 199-211.

[2] William A. Brown, "Christian Theology in Outline," (Scribners, 1906), p. 182.

[3] Alfred E. Garvie, "Christian Doctrine of the Godhead" (Doran, 1925), p. 382.

[4] William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), pp. 56, 59.

cient motive in life to try to bring about such a world, which would be the Kingdom of God.

This is the very center of the teaching of Jesus. In its various forms the phrase occurs forty-five times in Matthew, forty times in Luke, and fifteen (or twenty) times in Mark. The accent of the latter part of the New Testament is on the Church, but the Kingdom is still the end for which the Church exists. An active business man of America (Mr. A. A. Hyde, of Wichita, Kansas) interprets the Christian purpose accurately in saying:

> To become in reality a loving, working son of God in both his physical and his spiritual Kingdom should be every man's aim in coming into the visible Church. Religion is not to be an opiate for the people. It should wake men up; often it is allowed to put them to sleep.

The responsibility of the Church for an earnest attempt to apply the principles and spirit of Jesus to current life becomes more and more clear.[5] The young men of England are quoted in the (British) Christian Herald of February 9, 1928, as saying:

> We are passionately stirred by the iniquities of the housing of the poor, by the tragedy of armaments, by the wrongs of oppressed nationalities, and the Church seems so terribly taken up with the lighting and heating apparatus.

An American writer, who probably speaks as definitely for youth, says:

> For every person who disavows religion because some ancient and unrevised dogma outrages his in-

[5] This is more fully discussed in Study VI of this course.

telligence, several become irreligious because the social impotence of religion outrages their conscience.[6]

The Church is committed by its gospel of the value of personality to the correction of social conditions. If we believe that Jesus meant men to have opportunity for the highest life, to be real sons of God in the world, must we not rebel against conditions that virtually preclude the fullness of that life? It can be lived in some degree anywhere; Jesus himself lived it under adverse conditions, but the record shows that even he was restricted in some of his activities because of conditions in his environment, Matt. 13:58; 16:23; John 16:12. Right conditions are essential to the fullest expression of the good life.

The moral law requires this social expression. The "second" Commandment is one of love to one's neighbor. To how many neighbors? If to one neighbor, why not to all neighbors? Jesus made it plain that a neighbor is anybody who needs help and who can be helped, Luke 10:36, 37. When Zacchæus declared his purpose of social justice on a generous scale Jesus declared that salvation had come to his house, Luke 19:1-10. If this is valid for an individual, it applies with even greater force to nations and other social groups.

Some modern writers dislike the word "Kingdom" and would replace it with a term less suggestive of arbitrary control. Dr. Moffatt in his translation of the New Testament replaces it with "Reign" or "Realm," and several have proposed that we substi-

[6] Reinhold Niebuhr, "Does Civilization Need Religion?" (Macmillan, 1927), p. 12.

tute democratic terms entirely. Professor Atkins speaks on the other side:

> Hebrew expectations supplied a commanding name for an inclusive ideal—the Kingdom of God. It is doubtful if any phrase more rich in suggestion, intended to master the devout imagination, could be found. There is a splendor in it and amplitude and a note of authority and social suggestion and discipline and power. We do not find it inconsistent with our faith in democracy or our pride in a republic. We feel that a republic might be also the Kingdom of God and be a better republic thereby. It is the resolution of the human order in terms of divine will, at once soundly ethical and glowingly religious.[7]

No different term is needed. Jesus' idea of the Kingdom of God must be kept alongside his teaching of God as Father. It is the Kingdom of the Father; in it no one tries to rule his fellows but everybody tries to serve, Matt. 20:25-28. The word has gained a bad odor from human abuses; it must be redeemed for good uses. God has not ceased to be sovereign and no one who knows him in Jesus' terms would wish that he should. How should we want our order governed if not by such a God as Jesus presented? It is under his control that we find our true liberty and come to our largest independence. Nothing more certainly and swiftly deprives us of our freedom than rebellion against the relation which moral beings ought to hold to God. Our finest fellowship with each other is the outcome of our mutual relation to Him whom Jesus taught us all to call "Our Father." "No man is good enough to control a

[7] Gaius G. Atkins, "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 68.

fellow man''; no, but no man is good enough to be uncontrolled by God. In the Kingdom of God the Christian faith asserts the right of God to the final word in human life and in the social order.

But Was Jesus Social? Protest is sometimes made against any political and social element in the duty of the Church on the ground that Jesus did not accept this idea. A German scholar was estranged from Jesus when he found the public highways of Palestine so very bad with no recorded protest of Jesus regarding them. Dr. Klausner refuses to Jesus any right to be called a Jewish prophet because ''he lacks the prophet's political perception and the prophet's spirit of national consolation in the national and political sense.'' [8] Efforts of the Church to secure better temporal conditions have been denounced as an unholy alliance with the world, an interference with matters outside its province. Many years ago, following a sermon in which the duty of believers was pointed out, Lord Melbourne exclaimed, ''Nobody respects the Christian religion more than I do, but really, when it comes to intruding it into private life!'' A writer in The Atlantic Monthly, (January, 1928, p. 121) says that ''if one substitutes 'public' for 'private' in that sentence, one gets an excellent definition of what in Ireland to-day is regarded as the perfection of good political manners.'' Would it not represent a much wider view than that of Ireland?

It is true that the record of our Lord contains no direct attack on the existing social order in its politi-

[8] Joseph Klausner, ''Jesus of Nazareth'' (Macmillan, 1925), p. 414.

cal aspects. There is good reason for this. Rebellion against the Roman Government would have been merely spectacular—just one more futile revolution gaining no end. The fact that Jesus and the first apostles did not do needless and resultless things does not lessen the duty of their successors in their turn to do things which shall be fruitful and resultful. Plenty of men have frittered their lives away on some petty local issue, magnifying molehills into mountains because they lie under their eyes. Imagine Jesus leading a campaign in behalf of good roads in Palestine in the actual circumstances of his life! When impatient followers wanted to start a petty revolution around him he refused to be entangled in so transient a program, John 6:15. But this did not hinder his teaching such principles of human value and relationship that when the time came for a practicable blow it was logical to strike it. To let an idea loose in the world is more important than to strike a blow in an idealess world when it cannot serve any good end.

The good Samaritan did all he could when he corrected the results of an evil whose cause he could not reach. But when the time comes that the cause can be corrected, good logic requires that it be done. Clearing the road of robbers is the natural outcome of concern for men who fall among thieves on the Jericho road. Yet the particular victim cannot wait for impossible even though desirable programs to be made and attempted. We must not be so occupied with getting a better housing law passed that we cannot relieve a distressed family in the present bad housing situation. On the other hand there is no logic

in being so concerned for distressed families that we cannot help in passing a housing bill that will lessen distress for future families. The logic of Jesus' teaching involves social and political action as soon as it lies within the power of his followers. It calls them to no spectacular gestures, foredoomed to failure.

Many of the programs for social reform in our own day are mere panaceas, dealing with symptoms and not with the real disease. They cure *an* evil, not evil. Jesus declared himself clearly about this: "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit," Matt. 12:33. Most of us are trying to change the fruit, dealing with results. Jesus changes the tree; that takes care of the fruit. Personal service works on the results of evil; social and political service works on the causes of evil.

The teaching of Jesus includes all this.

It is illuminating to read Ellwood's "The Reconstruction of Religion" and note how after he has made a careful study of family life and economic life and political life and social pleasures, and, as a scientific sociologist, has sought to discover the one basis of stability and the one secret of salvation, he does nothing more or less in every case than to rediscover Jesus and restate the principles of the Christian gospel.[9]

It is difficult to see what society needs socially and politically to make it a proper order for human personalities which is not contained in the Christian gospel. It is equally difficult to see why this gospel should not be applied so widely as its inherent quali-

[9] Edwin D. Mouzon, "The Program of Jesus" (Doran, 1925), p. 143.

ties suggest.[10] Indeed, one of the best proofs of the social purpose of Jesus is the fact of his enormous social influence in subsequent history.

Jesus has had more than a casual influence on civilization. Whatever be one's theology, however far removed one may be from sympathy with the Christian Church, the influence of Jesus is unescapable. History with him is not the same as history without him. When all allowance has been made for human frailties among Christians and generous justice has been rendered to other religions, still the sensational fact remains that modern civilization originated and developed among his followers in Western Europe and America. Imperfect as they are, the social institutions which are now transforming human life bear the impress of his personality. To ignore Jesus is to ignore history.[11]

It seems hardly logical to suppose that he has had this influence without intending to have it and without intending that his religion shall continue it.

The Kingdom Present and Yet to Come. The rule of God in the world is taken for proved in Jesus' teaching. Whether men like it or not, God governs. Birds, flowers, grass, rain, harvests, continuance of human life—all such things are under the control of God. As to this ultimate sovereignty Christianity agrees with most religions. But the Kingdom of God in the sense of Jesus' phrase is one whose subjects are voluntary. The will of God is, in this sense, yet to "be done in earth, as it is in

[10] An interesting aspect of Jesus' experience is developed in Dr. James A. Robertson's "Jesus the Citizen" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), which discusses Jesus' relation to the cities of his time and land and his dealing with their evils and virtues.

[11] Shailer Mathews, "Jesus on Social Institutions" (Macmillan, 1928), p. 147.

heaven." And it is to be done at once by anyone who will do it, yet multitudes will reap the benefits of it even while they refuse to accept it voluntarily. It is here; yet it is coming.

With Jesus, the Kingdom of God was something more and other than a future irruption of mysterious forces out of the invisible world which should upset and transform the present world order. With Jesus the Kingdom was a present reality. Jesus was concerned far more about a new creature than about a new creation. Not to bring in a transformed physical universe did Jesus teach and labor but to transform human hearts and minds and to build the Kingdom of love in the souls of faithful disciples. . . . The final apologetic for Christianity is going to be in its applicability to the social, the economic, the interracial and international problems of the world we live in. The program of Jesus will turn out to be the best and final Christian apologetic. . . . Nothing is more needed nowadays than that Christians should begin in real earnest to practice their religion.[12]

Under the ultimate sovereignty of God we are involuntary; it covers us whether we accept it or rebel against it. In the Kingdom we are voluntary and we can advance it and serve it as we will. Its program can be studied and we can lay out our own lives so that they will be valuable to it. The ideals of the Kingdom ought to become our social and political program.

Four Items in the Program of the Kingdom. 1. *The Kingdom of God requires the correction of any conditions that prevent human good and growth.* (*a*) These may be environmental and readily cor-

[12] Edwin D. Mouzon, "The Program of Jesus" (Doran, 1925), pp. 68, 141.

rectable. This appears in Jesus' parable of The Sower, Matt. 13:3-9; 18-23. The seed was good; its failure came from the conditions into which it fell. So long as men live under the temptation of the Evil One, or in the midst of tribulation and persecution, or under extreme pressure of worldliness, it is virtually certain that some of them will go wrong. They are to be less blamed than protected. The hard, unyielding soil of the path needs to be broken up, the rocky subsoil needs to be blasted out, the thicket of briers uprooted, and the seed given its chance. In Jesus' explanation of the parable, no blame is laid on the seed, though we have an instinctive feeling that when seed becomes "he that was sown," responsibility enters the discussion. Even so the blame is not large. Here are conditions which thwart growth, none of which should continue.

(*b*) Sometimes hindrance may be due to inner personal failure or to ill will in the surrounding group. This is shown in the parable of The Tares, Matt. 13:37-43, and of The Talents, Matt. 25:14-30. Direct malice appears in the first, a desire to prevent the victory of good. In the second parable there occurs a breakdown of the will which lets a man frame up a cheap excuse for his failure. Many "good" men are too indolent to gain the results of goodness.

(*c*) The miracles of Jesus deal with still another condition hindering human good and growth. They reveal his attitude toward physical limitations which turn men into social liabilities rather than assets. Under his healings men who had been burdens on society became helpful factors in it. The demoniac man of Gadara, Luke 8:27-29, had been a terror and

peril to the community; he was made a useful member of the social group. The healing of every blind or lame or dumb person illustrates the same attitude. The limitations of physical ailments can be overruled for good, as in the case of Paul, II Cor. 12: 7-10, but it is not meant that such things shall continue in order to be overruled. They are to be corrected in the interest of human good and growth whenever possible. That is the attitude of Jesus.

Some conditions in the social order to-day are incompatible with the fullest human life—evils such as war, vice, labor oppression, population crowding, liquor-drinking, financial maladjustment, restriction of opportunity for the young of the poor. No one could seriously consider them to be according to the will of God except in the philosophical sense that he accepts the actions of free moral beings even when they are evil. They conflict directly with the Kingdom idea, and every follower of Christ is committed to their elimination by any force in his power. None of them can be considered necessary to human progress, nor part of any rational program of human development.

Moreover, each of these evils (no complete list is attempted) spreads beyond those who are immediately responsible and brings injury to innocent members of the group. This is incident to the interweaving of the social order. The experience of these unsigned newspaper lines is unhappily familiar:

> From slums where foul diseases hide,
> The free winds travel far and wide;
> The rich man living on the square
> Throws wide his windows for the air.

His petted child with every breath
Drinks in the viewless seeds of death.
The rich man, bowed down by his woe,
Wonders why God should send the blow.
The parson wonders, too, and prays,
And talks of God's mysterious ways.

But know, O man of high estate,
You are bound up with the poor man's fate.
The winds that enter at your door
Have crept across his attic floor.
If you would have all well with you,
Then must you seek his welfare, too.
If even selfishness were wise,
It would no other life despise.

Society is always meeting the opposition of those who place other interests above human good and growth. Suggestions of change in established customs are counted "radical" or even treasonable. After an early speech of Disraeli's, a hearer commented:

I took him to mean that if you wished for a time to retain your political power, you could only effect your purpose by securing for the people greater social felicity. Well, that's Radicalism; pretending that the people can be better off than they are is Radicalism and nothing else.[13]

But Christianity is always radical when it is most itself. It has no interest in overturning the social order merely for the sake of revolution, but when proper relation between things and men is denied, it cannot stop short of radical action. The early enemies of the faith were not far from right when they spoke of its advocates as men who were turning the world upside down, Acts 17:6. Hindering condi-

[13] André Maurois, "Disraeli" (Appleton, 1928), p. 150.

tions placed upon childhood, womanhood, manhood, always concern Christian believers. And any man who helps to correct these conditions is by so much a helper of the Kingdom of God.

No hard and fast rules can be laid down for such service. Changes in social life change Christian duty. Shortening of hours of labor became a duty at one time; a further shortening is now advocated in order to increase available leisure and to provide work for more laborers. This has been done in Italy; ought it to be done in America? Could all social needs now be supplied by shorter working hours? Or are the perils of unwisely used leisure greater than those of labor? A recent writer says that in a right social order men will neither work nor play, but will "do both at the same time." Is he right? Are the conditions of industry suitable to the making of manhood and to its natural growth? How is it in your own community? Is it none of your business? Can you love humanity according to the law of Christ and be indifferent to the way men make their living or house their families? Can society be right while its physical conditions, its industrial conditions, its moral conditions are wrong? What would the "Christianization of industry" mean? On a very fine astrolabe (an instrument for measuring the altitude of sun and stars) the inscription reads:

This astrolabe is the work of Hussein Ali, mechanic and mathematician, and servant of the Most High God. May His name be exalted throughout the universe!

If this were the way we thought of our work, what change would it make in society? Is it suggestive

that the first announcement of the birth of Jesus was to a group of farm laborers, Luke 2:8-14?

2. *The Kingdom of God establishes fairness and brotherhood as final tests in social and political relationships.* There is no ideal order in which the Kingdom may be established. It contains evils. We shall need to forgive those who do us wrong. Peter thought that if he forgave seven times it would be well, and he was generous according to common standards. Jesus cast off all limits. One must be incredibly generous, Matt. 18:12, 22. He made this same spirit a condition for true prayer, Mark 11:25. Yet he nowhere suggests disregard of right and justice. The parable of The Unjust Husbandmen, who abused the patience of the owner of the vineyard and went too far and suffered dismally for it, struck home to his hearers. They saw what he meant and passed judgment on themselves instinctively, Mark 12:1-12. Fairness does not mean that the other man has all the rights; he may be wrong and in fairness he may need to be rebuked. But no rebuke is safe at the hands of any man who thinks primarily of himself and his own rights.

(*a*) The story of The Rich Man and the Beggar deals with this point, Luke 16:19-31. No direct wrong is charged against the rich man; his whole social attitude was wrong. And even "in torments" he was unchanged; Lazarus was merely a means to his ends —let Lazarus leave his own comfort and bring comfort to him! It is the old spirit—no malice, but no regard, no brotherhood except on the level of the man's own social group. He could think of his own brothers, but not of men on other levels. That cannot

be the way of the Kingdom. Yet in a recent number of a London paper certain city landowners were shown to have incomes of from one and a half to three million pounds annually. In the same issue was the note reading, "The melancholy White Paper issued by the Home Office yesterday showed that no fewer than forty-six cases of death from starvation occurred in London alone last year." [14]

Such a contrast could be written in most cities of the world. It constitutes a distinct challenge to the Christian religion. This sharp contrast cannot be Jesus' plan for his Kingdom. Mechanical programs for redistribution of possessions carry no large promise of correction of the real evil. The change must come in a spirit of fairness and brotherhood at both ends of the line.

(*b*) Naturally this bears on the matter of war, which is organized strife between social groups. Whatever may be true of the past, war to-day has no adequate reason or defense. It violates the fairness and brotherhood which the Kingdom of God requires. Jesus once said in another connection that offenses are unavoidable, for rational beings cannot live together without differing about some things. But surely we are at the point where differences can be dealt with on rational grounds. Two theories of humanity are prevalent. Advocates of war preparation believe that man is inherently individualistic and hence belligerent; he cannot eliminate war without losing virility. Opponents of war believe that man is inherently fraternal and can never come to his best

[14] Frank Ballard, "Twentieth Century Christianity," (T. and T. Clark, 1927), p. 190.

except in rational and peaceful relations with his fellows. It takes the help of all and the animosity of none to make the most of any social group. The conditions of our day are forcing us to one of the two positions:

> We must go forward in one of two directions. We must go forward with competitive armament to an extent which will make our present efforts in that direction seem like child's play, or we must change our minds about international relations, and emerge from conceptions of fear, suspicion and hostility into the great Christian conception of a family of nations, governed by law, made one by charity and mutual respect, the political expression of the Kingdom of God on earth.[15]

(*c*) This demand for fairness and brotherhood involves the difficult relation between right ambition and humility. Jesus observed guests seeking the best places at feasts, Luke 14:7-11, and made it the occasion for a quiet warning against self-seeking. Yet the weakness of many men is their lack of a sound ambition, a healthy desire for advancement. Can we distinguish between an ambition that ends with oneself and an ambition that is for the sake of others? Jeremiah once warned a young assistant against seeking great things for himself, Jer. 45:5, exactly in line with the whole teaching of Jesus. We dare not say that humility is the best path to advancement, for when humility seeks advancement it becomes hypocrisy. At the same time, aggression in behalf of a good cause makes one liable to charges of personal ambition and easily passes over into it. We endanger fairness and brotherhood with all such programs. What about

[15] Address by Professor James Moffatt, D.D.

office-seeking in American politics? Is it healthful? Could it be based on a sincere belief that one is best fitted to render the service which the office demands? How far would an office seeker be believed if he made this claim? Are we on a sound brotherly basis, preparing for the Kingdom of God, in our American political life? If not, where would you change it?

3. *The Kingdom of God provides for loyal support of the institutions of society and government.* Its citizens are neither oversubmissive nor overrebellious. When Jesus had occasion to refer to Herod, he called him "that fox," Luke 13:32. Nothing could have fitted Herod better, and the incident reminds us that being meek does not mean being tame or insipid. On the other hand, it was charged against Jesus that he accepted the Roman Government, used its agents (publicans) in his inner group, served the needs of its officials, and refused to lead a rebellion against it. If one receives the benefit from Cæsar's coin, one must in all fairness do his duty by Cæsar, Matt. 22:20, 21. Cæsar cannot displace God, but God does not mean to displace Cæsar. No religious principle or limitation warrants us in refusing loyalty to the government from which we derive our fundamental advantages. A recent writer charges against Protestantism [16] that it permits revolution and rebellion against constituted authority. The charge will be welcomed by most Protestants. Futile gestures of revolution have no merit and our Lord made none. But as ability and participation in government increase, responsibility for making the institutions of society what they ought to be is unavoidable. There are times when

[16] The Atlantic Monthly, May, 1928, p. 608.

the genius of Christianity calls for change and revolution, not for its own sake but for the sake of humanity. At the same time, human relationships cannot be maintained without institutions and order. The fact that "our citizenship is in heaven," Phil. 3:20, need not preclude us, as it did not preclude Paul, from using earthly citizenship and accepting both its rights and its duties. The early Christians had to get along with conditions which they could not change; there are no conditions which their present successors cannot change if they will.

The problem of method remains. How far may the Church as such act on political and social conditions? Do you wish your minister to discuss these current conditions in the pulpit? Do you consider the Church timorous and ineffective because it does not "speak out" on such matters? During the summer of 1928 a plan was made requiring a very large appropriation by the United States Congress for a surprising naval program. When the bill finally appeared, however, the amount suggested was reduced by nearly two thirds. Former Attorney-General Wickersham said that "the slashing of the figures in the big Navy Bill before Congress should be attributed almost entirely to the quick and effectual protests from American Churches." Was this a wise use of power? It has been said that if there occurs another great war, it will be the fault of American and European Churches; is that a sound judgment?

Even if it is agreed that the Church must do something about political and social evils, the question still remains about what it shall do. Bishop McConnell thinks that even its declarations on paper have influ-

ence.[17] These declarations are apt to be based on an idealism which is neglected by the aggressive groups. But in a democracy, even so modified as that in America, nothing gets permanently done without a vigorous public opinion. Building such opinion is certainly a Church task. And when the time for action comes, the Church ought to see most clearly and guide most effectively. Some observers may count it an interference and a forfeiting of the "holy mission" of the Church, but it need be no such thing. If the Church really believes in the Kingdom of God, it cannot be indifferent to the institutions of society and government which influence for good or ill the lives of all the people.

In view of this, do you believe that the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America ought to make declarations in the name of the Churches regarding momentous political and social conditions—strikes, armament, labor controversies, internationalism, immigration restrictions, employment, and the like? If not, what method do you suggest for proper Church action?

4. *The Kingdom of God rises above all particular races and governments.* Jesus was a Jew, a member of one race, but he drew no racial lines. When he wanted an illustration to show how the Jewish law was most perfectly kept in spirit, he chose a Samaritan, a member of a socially hated group, Luke 10:33. The coming of a company of Greeks to him was the occasion for a peculiarly joyous exclamation, John 12:20-23. The richest faith he found was in a Roman

[17] "Christianity and Social Adventuring" (Century, 1927), p. 53. Edited by Jerome Davis.

centurion, Luke 7:9, and he had many friends among a class whose service of Rome made them accursed among their own people. Whenever a national or racial issue arose, he was always on the generous, human side of it. He took children as a standard for his Kingdom, and children know little of our racial or national distinctions until they are taught. The democracy of a lower-grade school is outgrown only as older people check the natural fraternity among children. If the childlike are the normal members of the Kingdom of God, then the Kingdom knows no racial or national limits.

The Kingdom of God is the ultimate international order in which nations find the same fellowship that individuals find in the normal social order. Modern movement is strongly in that direction.

Politically the world consists of a number of self-contained and independent nations each claiming complete sovereignty in defining the rights and duties of its citizens. Industrially and culturally, on the other hand, these divisions, in spite of all that protective tariffs and national prejudices have done or can do, are counting for less and less every day; the frontiers are tending to disappear; many are obliterated already; so that every nation, whether it likes it or not, must now consent to be invaded by forces and interests originating in foreign countries. . . . Political power stops at the frontier, but the demands of men for goods and services, even for the bare necessities of life, stretch themselves all over the world, while the answering supply is similarly unconditioned. . . . The causes of unemployment in Great Britain, a country deeply involved in foreign trade, originate in large measure in regions where the British Government has no control. . . . Industrial

conditions, which are the essential conditions of the modern world, are beyond the control of any existing government.[18]

Elihu Root declares that "war cannot be outlawed and peace cannot be preserved except through the establishment of international institutions"; to which M. Périgord adds that "these institutions, if planned and directed by statesmen animated by a genuine international spirit, will foster the growth of an international morality which should facilitate the settlement of international conflicts on the basis of justice and fair play."[19]

We do not choose between nationalism and internationalism. No man is fitted to love the world who does not love his own country, just as the finest social servant is a lover of his own home. But there can be no lines around Christian duty to humanity, no lines within which human regard operates and beyond which it does not run. The Kingdom of God will not come until we have right international relations. Neither individualism nor paternalism is its principle, but fraternalism. Racial identity need not come, but permanent racial inferiority is impossible if the spirit of Christ gets right of way. How far are you giving it right of way in your own racial attitudes and in the institutions which you influence?

FURTHER SUGGESTED READING

William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapter III.

[18] L. P. Jacks, "Constructive Citizenship" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), pp. 162, 163.

[19] Paul Périgord, "The International Labor Organization" (Appleton, 1926), p. vii.

Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), Chapter VIII.

Gaius G. Atkins, "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), Chapter XIII.

Edwin D. Mouzon, "The Program of Jesus" (Doran, 1925), Chapters IV, VI.

Reinhold Niebuhr, "Does Civilization Need Religion?" (Macmillan, 1927).

L. P. Jacks, "Constructive Citizenship" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928).

Shailer Mathews, "Jesus on Social Institutions" (Macmillan, 1928), Chapters III, IX.

Suggestions for Study IV

Continuing the discussion of the Kingdom of God, we consider here its religious significance. Think over the preceding study; how is it related to this?

1. Religion supports the Kingdom idea.

   a. The ultimate hope of the Kingdom lies in religion. Why do some men count the coming of the Kingdom a mere dream? What insures it?

   b. The principles of the Kingdom are religious. Discuss the two policies of goodness; which is more common in your observation? which is more serviceable?

   c. The power for the Kingdom is religious. What is the real power which can bring the Kingdom? Why cannot science assure its coming? How does the idea of the future affect it?

2. The Kingdom idea serves religion.

   a. The Kingdom saves religion from becoming self-centered, turns it outward. Discuss the difference between divine "worship" and divine "service." Which occurs in your church on Sunday mornings? How is the church saved from the mere effort to keep alive? If anyone should say in your hearing that your church is "holding its own," what would be your feeling about the remark?

   b. The Kingdom calls to a repentance which is religious. Do you agree that evils must be realized and repented before they can be corrected? Who ought to repent them? How far are individuals responsible for social evils?

   c. The Kingdom furnishes a goal for the Church on earth. Does your own church know exactly what it wants to produce in the world? Discuss the theories of rescue and reconstruction as Christian goals.

   d. The Kingdom involves coöperation between the church and the will of God. How far does the passing of laws secure the advancement of the Kingdom? What is the relation between the will of God and human laws?

Notebook: Write out as explicitly as you can what you conceive to be the real purpose of the church you know best, expressing it in terms which represent the actual thought of its people. Include in the statement a few words indicating whether and how a clear conception of the Kingdom of God as a goal would affect the activities and program of your church in your community. It will be well to have your own impressions confirmed by conversation with some of the leaders of the church.

STUDY IV

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AS A SOCIAL FORCE: THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND ITS RELIGIOUS SIGNIFICANCE

EVERYTHING had religious meaning for Jesus because everything includes God and nothing can be explained without bringing in God's love and power. Recall the arresting combination of ideas in one of his expressions: "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," Luke 12:32. Here are three figures gathered into one sentence: a shepherd and his flock, a father and his children, a king and his subjects. For Jesus the ideas are wholly compatible. The only King he knew was a Father with the heart of a Shepherd. The Kingdom meant the bringing about in the world of an order suitable to such a kingly Shepherd Father. But that would be essentially a religious result, for it would mean finding God's will everywhere and doing it gladly.

The Ultimate Hope of the Kingdom Is Religious. God's Kingdom works its way among men who will be loyal to him. It meets powerful opposition and the only hope for its conquest lies in the forces that root in religion. The Prime Minister of England, Mr. Baldwin, during the summer of 1928,

made a speech in which he praised the Bible as "high explosive literature," in which lies the inspiration for highest endeavor and for destruction of adverse influences. He said that it had started individual souls in ten thousand different places into "a new life, a new belief, a new conception, and a new faith." Its power has not waned and it is always startling the world with its program of progress. The only men to whom the Kingdom of God seems practicable are religious men, who believe that a purpose of God is being achieved in the world, with sufficient power back of it to bring it to success. Jesus once spoke of men who would "see the kingdom of God come with power," Mark 9:1. It will bring power but it requires power to bring it. And at the last this power comes from God. Among irreligious men the suggestion of such a world order as is implied in the Kingdom of God is chimerical, more a subject for amusement than for comment, the "baseless fabric" of an idle dream. The evils of the world have always been here, they argue, and they will always remain; human nature is unchangeable; history merely repeats itself. Even religious men have to face the weakness of the human order with grave questioning. One of our eminent scholars, writing in favor of an advancing human life, and not assenting personally to an adverse judgment, entitles Part I of his work, "Disillusionment with Respect to Himself Creeps Upon the Twentieth Century Man," and the heading of the first chapter is "Belief in Man Is Waning."

At none of these points does the old confidence in man remain unimpaired. We are not so sure that progress is inherently provided for in the nature of

man; we are far more sure of something old, crude, and of pine-stump quality in our make-up. . . . There is a growing skepticism of the worth of the common man. It is becoming almost popular to sneer at democracy.[1]

Brave men may hope on in spite of indications.

Hard as I sometimes find it to justify the faith that is in me amidst the portents and cataclysms which I have lived to see, I have been all my life an optimist and must remain so to the end. If one takes a broad survey of history, the human spirit has been all through the ages "upward tending though weak," and with all its weakness that tendency will, I firmly believe, persist.[2]

But unless one has a merely daring faith in progress, poorly sustained by actual observation, or a religious faith resting on assurance of God's will working through Christ, it is difficult to find any adequate ground for confidence.

A hope which has established, in the program of the Kingdom of God, the heroic ideal of a redeemed world and the confident expectation of the vindication of love and goodness in a timeless order is humanity's most precious inheritance.[3]

The Principles on Which the Kingdom Must Come Are Religious. Central among them is love.

Statesmen and peoples must, at the present time, seek to get the vision of Christ. They must try to

[1] George A. Coe, "The Motives of Men" (Scribners, 1928), pp. 9, 10.

[2] Sir Valentine Chirol, "Fifty Years in a Changing World" (Jonathan Cape, 1928), p. 340.

[3] Gaius G. Atkins, "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 69.

see the world as he saw and still sees it. You cannot build a new world order on a basis of hate. To brood over past injuries, to refuse to forget and forgive, is very natural. Yet it has no value. Both in private and in public life, ill will, jealousy, suspicion, the desire for revenge, do harm. They are, as it were, sand in the machinery of life. . . . It is absolutely true that we could not all live to ourselves without destroying civilization.[4]

But this principle involves an idea of human relationship which is born of religion.

The only possible field for religion is in societies and groups of men, just where the Kingdom is to be established. Two policies of goodness have emerged in history: (1) The ascetic policy abandons the world to its evil and encourages those who seek goodness to withdraw to a safe distance. In every religion, including Christianity, there have been monks, recluses, hermits, seeking to be good by separation from the world. In the Christian system, this withdrawal has often been well meant, as in maintaining scholarship for the benefit of the world or providing a refuge for the oppressed or burdened. But for all that it involves abandoning the world in its evil. (2) The other policy sends one who seeks goodness back into the world to live so forcefully and helpfully that he will be protected from evil. Jesus did not ask to have his followers taken out of the world but only that they might be kept from the evil, John 17:15. He speaks of "the prince of the world" as one who sought to do harm rather than good, but he adds that "he hath nothing" in Christ himself, John 14:30, so

[4] Bishop Ernest W. Barnes, "Should Such a Faith Offend?" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), pp. 107, 108.

that Christ was perfectly safe in his presence, not from harm that could be done *to* him but from harm that could be done *in* him—the only harm that need give good men any serious concern. This protective influence makes it possible for men to advance the Kingdom in the only place where it can be established—where it is most needed and where, therefore, their lives are most endangered. Good men are sometimes overwhelmed by the very evils which they are set to overcome. Yet there is no escape from contact with evil, and unless one is insulated from it by some inner protection the danger becomes a reality. The corrective is essential religion realized in one's own life.

The Power for the Kingdom Is Religious. God's power operates in the midst of human antagonisms or confusion. The Kingdom gains power as men respond to that will. Recall the familiar sentence from Washington's Farewell Address: "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports." President Cleveland, a century later, expressed a similar mind: "All must admit that the reception of the teachings of Christianity results in the purest patriotism and in the best type of citizenship."

All this is native to the thinking and teaching of Jesus. "The idea of the Kingdom of God as preached by Jesus is primarily a religious one."[5] In all his thinking he comes back to God and to human relationships as arising from the idea of God. Social justice and political stability are rooted in the will

[5] Andrew C. Zenos, "The Plastic Age of the Gospel" (Macmillan, 1927), p. 49.

of God. We discover the laws of right and wrong in conduct, but they are not originated in human action. The fact that a given policy "serves the common purpose" does not show that it is right until that "common purpose" is lifted into relation to the will and purpose of God. Morality is rooted in the will of God and it is right not because it is helpful to us; rather, it is helpful to us because it is right. The Kingdom of God will be best for humanity at all points because it is God's Kingdom. The conception is primarily religious.

This is so markedly true of the Christian idea of the Kingdom that it cannot be fully expressed without including the religious idea of a future life in which the efforts made in this life can be continued and brought to final success. But the idea of a power which carries on into the next life is purely religious.

Man is slowly entering the Kingdom of the good, the beautiful, and the true. He is instinctively, though with grievous failures, seeking to create on earth the Kingdom of God. Progress achieved in the past gives us sound reason to hope that further progress, to which we can assign no limit, will continue in the future. The process, so far as we can see, will be slow and by no means uniform. We delude ourselves by extravagant optimism if we think that immediately "there's a good time coming." But the fact remains that the Kingdom of God is an ideal realm for which, and to which, humanity struggles. Science, it may justly be said, gives us no assurance that the ideal will ever be reached on earth and no hope that, if reached, it would be permanent. . . . It seems to me that man strives here for that which he will attain hereafter. The spiritual interpretation

which I give to the universe leads me to a belief in the permanence of spiritual values, to a conviction that human personality in which those values are manifested will not be destroyed.[6]

Jesus drew no sharp line between the present life and its continuance beyond the event of death. Programs begun here could continue there. This life is fleeting and provides no security for personality; the future life is permanent. He spoke of the future as a condition in which his disciples could be with him in the same sense as when they were with him here, John 14:3. It is poor religion that makes no provision for a future life except the continuance of good influences in other lives, while the personality is obliterated. Building a Kingdom on earth and then departing into oblivion while others carry it on, until presently all cease and neither Kingdom nor citizens exist, is a futile procedure compared with building a Kingdom whose essential qualities continue on earth and also in the departed personalities which advanced it. We do not understand Jesus' idea of the Kingdom if we limit it to this earth and the duration of human lives on it. We are taught to pray that the will of God may be done on earth as it is done in heaven, Matt. 6:10, which implies that a far more permanent, secure order exists in heaven. The Kingdom of God is not an earthly invention; it is an earthly reproduction of a heavenly fact. When we get it here, we shall have what already exists elsewhere. But science has little to say about that future; it is a religious conception.

[6] Bishop Ernest W. Barnes, "Should Such a Faith Offend?" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 258.

Four Distinctive Religious Meanings. 1. *The Kingdom of God saves religion from being self-centered.* It offers a basis of service rather than of self-support. Keeping a church alive has no particular merit unless it is doing something worth living for. After the transfiguration scene the disciples would have immediately proclaimed the majesty of Jesus which had appeared to them, if he had not warned them not to let it be known; meanwhile, they found a case of desperate need at the foot of the mountain which must be relieved, Matt. 17:9, 18. This is typical of religion. It turns outward, not inward. When Peter declared that he loved Christ, he was told to enrich the lives and safeguard the interests of others, John 21:15-17. The tasks suggested to him were personal but they had social value and they would help to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

There is always danger of thinking of the Church as an end rather than as a means. Many plans and programs are devoted to its maintenance, whereas it is often a fair question whether in a given instance it ought to be maintained unless it can be transformed. Until it is doing Kingdom service of some sort, it is not a true Church and has no real rights. We sometimes complain that people do not come more largely to services—midweek prayer meeting and the like—when it is fair to ask whether there is any good reason why they should come for no more results than are achieved in some services, although their coming might enlarge the results. That is the weakness of men's clubs, Young People's Societies, and other organizations. The fact that they create a sense of fellowship is not enough, unless the fellowship works

out into ministry for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. The cure is not to drop them, necessarily; it is to make them efficient as real agencies of the Kingdom.

Distinction has been noted between "divine worship" and "divine service." It is "worship" that occurs on Sundays, if we use the distinction. "Service" is the activity and helpful ministry which grow out of "worship." If our worship does not send us out more fit for service, if its only effect is to stir our feelings and give us a sense of comfort and ease, it is not doing all that it might do. Jesus set a hard road before his followers, telling them that they might count on his presence on condition that they were attempting the difficult thing, Matt. 28:18-20.

The fact of the Kingdom and its need for advancement is a challenge to the Church as an agency of religion. Rightly seen, it makes narrow sectarianism impossible. Any adequate idea of the Kingdom shows it a task great enough for all Christian believers at their best. No fraction of the whole body can attempt it alone. Jesus spoke of the unity of his followers as one way of making the world believe in him, John 17:21, and Paul carried the same meaning into his figure of the one body of Christ, I Cor. 12:12-21, for whose strengthening all of us have our tasks from God, Eph. 4:11-13. In your own community could the work of the Kingdom of God, the change of social, political, economic conditions, setting free the lives of all the people for their largest development, be accomplished by your one church? Is it not a task larger than all the churches together can hope to accomplish? Our sectarian divisions are an evi-

dence of our dimmed vision of the Kingdom of God as a present duty and opportunity.

2. *The Kingdom involves an element of repentance which is distinctly religious.* The evils which must be corrected before the Kingdom comes are not mere natural developments yet to be outgrown. They are traceable to human wills. John the Baptist called people first of all to repentance because of the approaching Kingdom, Matt. 3:8, and Jesus took up the same message, Matt. 4:17.

Here arises the whole question of responsibility for social and political evils. How far can any individual hold himself culpable for them? After a bitter religious riot between Hindus and Moslems in India, Mr. Gandhi undertook a fast of twenty-one days as an expression of humiliation and personal responsibility. Surely, he said, if he had been the man he ought to have been and had wielded the influence he ought to have wielded, such a thing would not have occurred. How far was he right? It is like the expression of Daniel, Dan. 9:4-16, in which he took upon himself the sin of the whole people. Is not the same idea involved in the familiar teaching that Christ shares our iniquities though he knew no sin himself, II Cor. 5:21? The confession of personal sin is obvious enough; are we not failing in the confession of corporate sin? Our share of social responsibility lies lightly on most of us. The existence and needs of the Kingdom are a constant challenge to our sense of moral responsibility.

The first step in the cure of evils is a sincere acceptance of blame for their existence. If we had been the men we should have been and had wielded

the influence we should have wielded, they would not have existed—that is the normal Christian point of view about social and political ills. A godly woman in a large American city used to say that she read her daily papers always with a sense of shame; surely, if she were doing her full duty in the use of her time, her money, her influence, some of these evils would have been prevented. To irreligious men all this is nonsense, mawkish sentiment. They consider the evils either inevitable in the course of things or the sole responsibility of those who commit them. However, the hope of correction lies in the increase of people who accept some measure of responsibility for them and work for their correction. Unless the evils cause something of what Daniel called "confusion of face," there will be no serious effort to overcome them.

A growing sense of corporate responsibility carries large promise of human advancement. In former days one nation was not conceived to have any duty regarding other nations. Let them mind their own affairs, unbothered and unaided. There is still some of this sentiment. But corporate obligations are being more widely recognized. The rights of China are partly the concern of America. The rights of the children and families of drunkards are partly the concern of the sober elements in the community. Such things are not narrowly personal. No nation can oppress any part of its population without bringing other nations into the issue sooner or later. Humanity is so bound together that the wrongs of one become the concern of all. When an American firm secured the right to develop a water power in Abys-

sinia (1927) the United States Government made it known that the use of slave labor would not be permitted in fulfilling the contract and that it would not protect the firm in any of its rights if this understanding was violated. It is no answer to say that in Abyssinia slave labor is still used; the Government replies that it ought not to be used anywhere. Is it right in this limitation?

Satisfaction with conditions that hinder the Kingdom of God precludes correction of them. Cynicism regarding their correction is equally prohibitive. The hope for their correction lies in a sense of shame and sin in their continuance which will be felt by religious people only. Others may regret them and work for their correction on economic or social grounds, but the only permanent change is the radical change of the spirits of men. This is religious in its essence.

3. *The Kingdom becomes a goal for the Church on earth.* (*a*) Recall the two aspects of religious duty —saving individual souls and changing the social order so that it is fitted for changed souls. Each needs the other. Saved men often relapse into unsaved living if they are plunged into social conditions unsuited to the new life. Great revivals are frequently followed by reactions on this account. The order to which the converts return is unchanged. In mission lands there is at first no Christian environment in which the new converts can be developed, and one reason why the national churches are now becoming so strong and independent is the growth of a Christian society in which saved lives are at home. A common opinion among "slum workers" in cities is that converts, individually or in families, must be

taken out of the impossible conditions in which they have been living in order to prevent their relapsing. In doing individual work, that is, one is thrown into social work. The social order must be changed or abandoned if the saved life is to be brought to its best.

On the other hand, social ministry is not possible except through the use of saved individuals. Is it wise to remove renewed families or individuals from the social group in which they have been living? Are they not meant to be salt and light in such sense that they will find their best growth just where they are? When we do not approve the conditions of our group shall we leave it or remain within it and work for its correction? Which is the Christian course? What ought churches to do when social conditions change around them?

Many social workers lack definite goals. They oppose existing conditions and see many details in which they should be changed, but they are not equally clear about what they want in place of the existing order. They do not know where they are going, but they believe they are on the way. The Kingdom suggests where we are going. Getting the will of God accepted as a law of life, bringing men and groups into right relations to that will, and to each other because of it, is a feasible goal. It leaves large space for sincere discussion of details and methods, but it can save Christian believers from aimless labor.

(*b*) Christians appear hopelessly divided in their theory of duty at this point. Some believe in rescue, the duty of redeeming men from the world. Some believe in reconstruction, the duty of building a right social order on earth. The difference is generally

associated with belief in the return of Christ, but it is not so wide in practice as might be expected. Many ardent advocates of the return of Christ as the hope of the new order are active and efficient in bringing about better social conditions at once. They argue that when our Lord returns (in the personal and obvious sense) he will not wish to find his disciples indifferent to the woes of little children, the wrongs done to women, the oppressions of labor, the housing of families, or to any other evil that now marks the social order. Surely attack on these evils cannot delay the coming of Christ, and he could not mean that hope of his return shall lead to the neglect of human need. These advocates merely insist that attempts to correct social evils shall not absorb time and strength to the exclusion of individual service. Over against them are the social workers who think that social changes will automatically mean individual correction, an error that has been often exposed. The two must go together—that is a commonplace.

No valid reason appears why Christian believers may not coöperate in social ministry even while they differ on the ground of final hope for the new order in which they all believe. When a believer in the imminent return of Christ was challenged for his interest in erecting a costly church edifice, he replied that he did not suppose that his Master would be any more welcome in a consecrated barn than in a building worthy of his gospel. Each group, whether of the rescue or of the reconstruction belief, finds obstacles in the extreme advocates of the other, but in their rank and file they are not far apart in Kingdom duty. Their practice reveals an underlying unity.

(*c*) Christianity is not chiefly concerned with exceptional men; it is for the rank and file, and what they need must always be its concern. A few brave souls can win through under any conditions, but only a few. Most men depend on help from the conditions under which they live, and to allow these conditions to be uncorrected is merely to serve notice on the mass of mankind that they cannot be helped to the right life.[7] If we measure our activity by the unusual case, not giving first importance to the man on the street, we miss the line of our Master's interest. "The common people heard him gladly," Mark 12:37, and his two leading disciples were unlearned and ignorant men as ordinary culture went, Acts 4:13. If common men need a changed environment in order to live the best life, then Christian believers must be interested in a saved environment, no matter how many interesting instances can be discovered of people who have got along well in bad conditions. This changed environment, the Kingdom of God on earth, constitutes a goal for the Church. Every movement ought to look toward a rebuilt world, rebuilt according to the program and spirit of Christ.

4. *The Kingdom is a program of coöperation between the Church and the will of God.* It is *God's* Kingdom and not a scheme of the Church. But it is a Kingdom on earth and therefore part of the responsibility of the Church. Christians pray for it in The Lord's Prayer and whatever one prays for one is bound to work for when he has a chance. John Oxenham's little book, "The Man Who Would Save

[7] This is discussed in Walter Lippmann's Barbour-Page Lectures (1928) at the University of Virginia, published under the title, "American Inquisitors" (Macmillan, 1928).

the World''[8] tells of an effort of a returned soldier to get everyone to pray sincerely for the spread of the spirit of Christ among men. But immediately they began to live by that spirit themselves.

We are having recently a strong accent on ''humanism,'' to the exclusion of the idea of God.[9] The theory is that the only ideal to hold before men is human progress, and that they are to seek it unaided. The idea and the hope of its attainment are rooted in the nature of things and the origin of that nature is unknown. It rests on the extreme interpretation of evolution. Whatever is to be said in its favor, at least it is not according to the Christian idea; it would never fit into Jesus' scheme of life or into his hope for human progress. Nor do its advocates think that it would; they count it an advance on Jesus. A tone of cynicism marks much of the discussion, sometimes lightened by high laudation of humanity in the abstract without too much regard for the actual day-by-day men who make up humanity.

The need for God in any program for human good and growth appears as soon as its conditions are named. In a thoughtful article Senator William E. Borah, of the United States Senate, writes:

> If I were going to inscribe a banner under which to arouse the dispirited and discouraged millions of brave and loyal citizens, I would precede all other inscriptions, plans, and pledges with that of obedience to the law because it is a law. . . . What shall it

[8] Longmans, 1927.

[9] As in the volume, ''Humanist Sermons'' (Open Court Publishing Co., 1927), C. W. Reese, editor, in which God is seldom mentioned and the word is sometimes printed with a small ''g.'' But see Bishop McConnell's ''Humanism and Christianity'' (Macmillan, 1928).

profit that leaders have planned and patriots have striven and sacrificed through all these years if we have come at last to the fearful, accursed creed that constitutions are to be disregarded, laws to be evaded or defied, and, finally, that we are to accept and put in practice the vicious and destructive and savage rule that every man is a law unto himself? The bed rock, the granite formation, upon which great civilizations and powerful governments are built is obedience to the law. That is the beginning and the end of all good government.[10]

But if men feel that law is a mere human enactment for which there is no sanction but current opinion, how shall they be prevented from defying it in the interest of an opinion of their own? We are thrown back on a higher right not dependent on but merely expressed in the civil law. Senator Borah's closing words in the article quoted reveal his own faith: "I believe in Christianity and in the churches of every denomination. I believe their supreme task, their supreme opportunity, is to help to build the character life of the nation."

Character, however, runs down to the depths where religion is found. It depends on some sense of a right higher than oneself, and at the last on some right higher than any human expression. The Kingdom of God is not a human device or a human program, and its hope does not rest ultimately on the zeal of its human adherents. As Mordecai said to Queen Esther, the whole scheme arises from God and he will see it through, even if he must find other agents than those that might have been used, Esth. 4:14.

There are great forces of development in the world.

[10] "Christianity and Social Adventuring" (Century, 1927), pp. 19, 20. Edited by Jerome Davis.

They may be hindered, but not finally thwarted. They belong to the plan of God. Men can coöperate with them, neglect them, oppose them. In any case it is men who suffer, for the forces themselves lie too deep in the nature of things to be destroyed. This is the Christian faith, based on the teaching and experience of Jesus. In the presence of such forces, human effort becomes worth while, assured of success. All faithful living and service contribute to the final victory, but the victory is assured in the fact that the Kingdom is the expression of God's will. In bringing it into reality in the earth the Church is merely one factor.

During the antislavery agitation, Lincoln said to a Kansas audience:

> That our principle, however baffled or delayed, will finally triumph, I do not permit myself to doubt. Men will pass away—die, die politically and naturally; but the principle will live and live forever. Organizations rallied around the principle may go to pieces, thereby losing all their time and labor; but the principle will remain, and will reproduce another and another, until the final triumph will come.[11]

There is no real ground for such assurance except religious conviction. For Christian thinking, the success of righteousness is certain because it is the will of God—such a God as Jesus revealed.

Even if history depresses us with its record of constant and general failure to realize the ideal, it also suggests something that makes effort worth while—the sense of a divine purpose in history which, if it is never perfectly realized, but is often almost baffled

[11] Quoted in "The Survey," February, 1927, p. 608.

by human weakness and sin, is yet visible enough, to those who have eyes to see, to nourish in them that passion for coöperation with God which is, I suppose, the deepest and most enduring motive which can stir us to action and sustain us in it.[12]

Further Suggested Reading

Gaius G. Atkins, "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), Chapter III.

Bishop Ernest W. Barnes, "Should Such a Faith Offend?" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), Chapters X, XVIII, XIX.

"Faith and Order," World Conference on Faith and Order (Doubleday, Doran, 1927), pp. 500-507.

Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), Chapter VII.

Edwin D. Mouzon, "The Program of Jesus" (Doran, 1925), Chapters III, V.

[12] Bishop Charles Gore, "Christ and Society" (Scribners, 1928), pp. 19, 20.

Part II

THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE TO CURRENT LIFE

Suggestions for Study V

With this study we begin the second part of the course, comparing the Christian message with the practices of nations (V), Churches (VI), and non-Christian religions (VII, VIII). Review the main points of the first part.

Discuss the propriety of calling a nation "Christian." Do you think the missionary cause gains or loses by being connected with "Christian nations"? In your own circle which tendency is stronger—that of overpraise or that of overblame of the nation and of more local forms of government?

1. The value of religion as a moral check on national actions. Why did Samuel condemn Saul so sharply? Was it deserved? What position do you take on the duty of the Church in public issues? Discuss the Chesterton incident; the validity of Morley's word about Gladstone. Should the Church try to influence legislation? If so, how? If not, what way is there of maintaining the moral check?

2. International relations are becoming more important, calling for a right spirit, best created by religion. The power and danger of "white" people. Does the quotation from Secretary Root express the mind of the nation as you know it?

3. These relations raise moral issues, best cleared on a religious basis. Why are nations so suspicious of each other? Discuss the "Uncle Shylock" incident.

4. The Christian religion places persons above things, human interests above mercantile advantage. How does this bear on national policies? Is the "profit" or commercial motive legitimate in international relations? Trace the history of the revenge motive in the Bible.

5. The individual Christian must sometimes sit in judgment on national policies. Discuss the question of his right to do so. Would it be right to refuse to support a war in which one's nation is engaged? Might an international treaty be condemned because of its unequal treatment of a weaker nation?

Notebook: Write a brief discussion of the famous saying of Stephen Decatur: "Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong." Is there any sense in which such a sentiment could be adopted by a Christian believer? Do not be too dogmatic about it at first; sincere men differ about the issue presented.

STUDY V

CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND NATIONAL PRACTICES

In the preceding four studies we have considered the Christian religion in its essential reality—as the gift of its Founder, Jesus Christ (I), which results in a way of personal living (II) and in a social program, the Kingdom of God, whose significance is social and political (III) and also religious (IV). With this study we turn to its wider relations—to the practices of nations (V) and Churches (VI) and to the other religions of the world (VII) and the people of those nations (VIII) among whom it carries on part of its program of expansion. The course closes with a study of this personal and social program in fuller detail. At this point, therefore, we consider the relation of the Christian religion to national practices.

It is open to question how far we may speak of nations as "Christian." The doubt takes two lines: Some refuse to use the word for anything but an individual, on the ground that only an individual can hold the personal relation to Christ which is implied in it. Others doubt whether Christian morals apply to the actions of a nation. They feel that political ethics are not religious and that in trusteeship a man cannot do as he thinks abstractly right

but must consider practical possibilities more than in personal conduct. A business man may give away his own money for causes that he approves while he may not give away a firm's money. An official may refuse to grant a pardon to an offender whom he would gladly pardon if he consulted merely his own wishes. Objectors ask whether Jesus' principle of self-forgetfulness can apply to nations. Dare a nation be other than self-seeking? How far do the limitations of trusteeship apply? If everybody in the nation were Christian, the case might be simpler, but no such nation has ever existed. Can a minority or even a majority of Christians properly impose their ideas or methods on the non-Christian part of a nation?

Now, if to be "Christian" is to be a perfect expression of the Christian ideals, then of course there are not even any individual Christians, since none of them is perfect. But if by a "Christian" we mean one who is determined in his actions by predominantly Christian ideals and purposes, there seems no reason why nations should not become Christian as well as individuals. They may be sufficiently dominated by Christians to lead to the expectation that public action will be of the Christian type. This would make a nation Christian as an individual is Christian in life. Naturally a nation cannot be "saved" and "go to heaven," because it has no continuing identity, but it can accept and apply Christian principles of conduct.

Indeed, unless it can do so, Christianity is isolated from one of our chief concerns and cannot cover all our living. Also, it loses one of its largest arguments

for world acceptance. A thoughtful Chinese, J. J. Poan, says that "one of the chief difficulties is that Christianity has not yet produced a nation that acts in a Christian spirit." In this day of national aspirations it is useless to present a faith to men with the proviso that it must not be applied to their chief interest. Chinese patriots attack both Christ and Confucius for lack of the revolutionary spirit.

The Chinese Anti-Christian Union, which seeks to define Christianity as the spiritual arm of foreign economic imperialism, is nothing like so powerful as its adherents claim. But a conviction that Christian doctrine is not a vital factor in the policy of Western nations, and that foreigners are more anxious to see the Chinese practice it than to observe it themselves is practically universal among the nationalistic students with whom I have spoken.[1]

The only way to change this conviction is for us to see to it that Christianity does influence national actions and policies. Some have always counted it chimerical in individual lives. We cannot wonder that the same observers count it so in national matters.

On the other hand, men with non-Christian political programs are apt to find it troublesome. In his address on May 17, 1928, Commissar Bukharin, President of the Third Internationale, said that "six most dangerous enemies of communism within Russia" must go before the movement can succeed. The second of these enemies is

The enormous religious revival in Russia, which not only holds Russian women in its grip, but also is

[1] Felix Morley, "Our Far Eastern Assignment" (Associated Press, 1926), p. 133.

developing among Russian youths. Besides the Russian Orthodox Church, various sects are active in industrial centers, many factories reporting that from sixty to seventy per cent of the workers belong to churches. The Christian religion presents a serious danger to the future of communism, and the communist youths must combat the tendency of their members to attend church and must wage an active fight against the clergy.

Wholesale condemnation of national actions and programs has no value. Between "hundred-per-centism" and cynicism there is not much to choose. Some sneer at all pretense of national virtue; others rebel at any suggestion of fault in their own nation. We complain of the "my-country-right-or-wrong" spirit, but we must complain also of the "my-country-always-wrong" spirit. One minister was described as so strongly impressed with the evil of his hearers that he could not think of their virtues. Another was so pleased with his hearers that he could not think of them as sinners. Neither is to be commended. Patriots who count it disloyal to suggest anything but good in their nation are as far astray as cosmopolitans who see nothing worthy in their own nations and disbelieve in national honor and service.

The Christian Religion as a Moral Check. No nation is safe without constant moral check on its actions. The Christian conscience as expressed in Christian individuals and in the Christian Church should constitute such a check. In the early story of Israel, I Sam., ch. 13, Samuel pronounced Saul's ultimate exclusion from leadership after the king had offered a sacrifice, thus assuming the functions of a

priest. This was not pride of office, since Samuel himself did not belong to the priestly tribe and was not continuing a tradition but, if anything, violating it when he offered sacrifices. But a priest king is a dangerous official, since he lacks any check on his actions. Nathan the prophet could rebuke David the king to his face, II Sam. 12:7, but if there were no one to do this a ruler would have no check. Nothing could be worse for a government than to have such power that adverse criticism is perilous. Note how it worked in II Chron. 16:7-10. Nations claim the right in emergencies to restrict public utterance, as in perilous war times, but this restriction can be overdone even in such times and should be abandoned as early as possible. The story of Jeremiah shows that the true patriot may be the nation's most adverse critic. Democracy cannot prosper when the people are gagged.[2]

The method of passing moral judgment is open to much discussion. During his campaign for the outlawry of war (1928), Secretary of State Kellogg said: "In the name of the Government of the United States I bespeak the continued support of every church in the present movement for the promotion of world peace." Objection was made to this plea on the ground that while individuals might be urged to give this support, the churches as such must not attempt it.

[2] This point is urged by G. Bernard Shaw in "The Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism" (Brentano's, 1928), Chapter LXXIV, but he posits for it only an opposing political party: "The Government [should] be unsparingly and unceasingly criticized by a rival set of politicians who are determined to pick every possible hole in the proceedings." This is apt to make the check quite other than moral and would not lessen the need for religion in action.

Already the churches, or at least many of them, are enlisted in such disparate activities as selecting Presidents, enforcing prohibition, and supporting blue laws, with the result that to many observers the teaching of the Word of God appears to have become a side issue. The proposal that the churches now get behind Mr. Kellogg's scheme may very well be the last straw. The churches would do well to consider very carefully before they undertake any more responsibilities of a secular and political nature.[3]

Might not the churches reply that when war comes they are among the first to suffer its restrictions and its losses in morals and ideals? And is not the main issue of war a moral issue, in which the churches should be primarily interested? If nations can prepare for war without moral check, we are back again on the basis of uncensored national conduct.

When the Archbishop of Canterbury and other clerics raised their voices during the extended British mine strike in 1925-1927, the Prime Minister bade them mind their own business. He said that they had no more right to mix in an industrial dispute than a mine owner would have to propose a basis for Church union. To this Gilbert K. Chesterton objected:

We cannot tolerate this thesis: that the two things have merely to keep to their own departments. Obviously we cannot have the pirate saying to the priest: "You are master in your church and I am master in my ship. I should not think of interfering with you when you make people walk in the procession and you must not interfere with me when I make people walk the plank." Yet the argument is no more absurd about the privateer than about the profiteer.

[3] Editorial in Baltimore Evening Sun, June, 1928.

But, in addition, is it not clear that deep religious interests are involved in such a situation? Churchmen may not know the details of what should be done in a given case, but they may know very clearly the principles on which the decision must be made if it is to serve the human lives which are involved. The men who gain or lose by industrial or national policies are exactly the men who make up the Church and call for any guidance of life it can give. There is no political or industrial or economic man as apart from a religious man. The man who goes to business on Monday is the same man who went to Church the day before. Religion is not one of man's interests; it is a spirit covering the whole of his life and all his interests. The matter is well stated here:

> Lord Salisbury called Gladstone "a great Christian." Nothing could be more true or better worth saying. He not only accepted the doctrines of that faith as he believed them to be held by his own Communion; he sedulously strove to apply the noblest moralities of it to the affairs both of his own nation and of the commonwealth of nations. It was a supreme experiment. People will perhaps one day wonder that any of those who derided the experiment and reproached its author failed to see that they were making manifest in this a wholesale skepticism as to the truth which they professed to prize, far deeper and more destructive than the doubts and disbeliefs of the gentiles of the outer courts.[4]

The weakest phase of national life is in the sphere of moral decisions. Our vision is outrunning our vigor. M. Périgord, in his volume (Appleton, 1926)

[4] John Morley, "The Life of William Ewart Gladstone" (Macmillan, 1903), Vol. I, p. 3.

on "The International Labor Organization" set up by the League of Nations reminds us:

> We have all said very loudly that we want peace and justice. But if the nations of the world had wanted them supremely and consistently we would have them in satisfactory measure. Had you entered the various parliaments of the world during the last six years, listened to the addresses delivered, and read the official press, could you have said in all honesty that governments want peace and justice?[5]

We know what ought to be and yet are unwilling to pay the price of securing it. President Coolidge's address to Congress (December 5, 1927) contained these sentences:

> Proposals for promoting the peace of the world will have careful consideration. But we are not a people who are always seeking for a sign. We know that peace comes from honesty and fair dealing, from moderation and a generous regard for the rights of others. The heart of the nation is more important than treaties. A spirit of generous consideration is a more certain defense than great armaments. We should continue to promote peace by our example and fortify it by such international covenants against war as we are permitted under our constitution to make.

Can Christian churches be unconcerned for anything that is determined by the heart of the nation? Is not a nation's heart exactly the chief concern of religion?

The Christian Religion Widens National Obligations. New conditions are bringing international conduct into larger prominence. It required centuries to develop a sound nationalism; it may re-

[5] Page 3.

quire much less time to set the developed product in its right international relations. There is no conflict between the two ideas. The Russian Commissar Bukharin, in the speech already quoted, deplored the rise of "Russian nationalism and patriotism" as a serious danger. Instead, he advocated *soviet* internationalism, a world revolution in which individual nations would lose their identity. This is not the Christian expectation. Yet there is danger to true internationalism from exaggerated nationalism or pride of race. It has been estimated that nearly one third of the human beings on earth to-day are "white" people. They occupy four tenths of the habitable earth and control nine tenths of it. This gives the "white" race such influence as was never held by any other race since races began.[6] Some of the members of the "white" race see here a duty which takes slight account of other races.

If this great race, with its capacity for leadership and fighting, should ultimately pass, with it would pass what we call civilization. It would be succeeded by an unstable and bastardized population, where worth and merit would have no inherent right to leadership and among which a new and darker age would blot out our racial inheritance. Such a catastrophe cannot threaten if the Nordic race will gather itself together in time, shake off the shackles of an invertebrate altruism, discard the phantom of internationalism, and reassert the pride of race and the right of inherent merit to rule.[7]

[6] Edwin D. Mouzon, "The Program of Jesus," (Doran, 1925), p. 193.

[7] Madison Grant's Introduction to Lothrop Stoddard's "Rising Tide of Color" (Scribners, 1920).

If these words were spoken in behalf of any other race but our own, we should count them sheer arrogance. In our behalf many count them words of sober wisdom. But of course they are meant to constitute the death of internationalism.

This is an old issue. Mr. Gladstone believed that there are other things in the world besides political necessities; there are moral necessities: "Remember that the sanctity of life in the hill villages of Afghanistan, among the mountain snows, is as inviolable in the eyes of Almighty God as can be your own." Disraeli, at the time (1879) his chief political opponent, replied with a practical appeal to "men who are not ashamed of the Empire which their ancestors created, and not ashamed of the noblest of human sentiments, now decried by philosophers—the sentiment of patriotism. One of the greatest of Romans, when asked what were his politics, replied, '*Imperium et Libertas,*' and this would be a good motto for England."[8]

This puts the empire first and liberty afterward, on the theory that the only safeguard for liberty is imperial strength and stability. If this must be so in the new and intimate relationships of the modern world, we are in a bad way. We must live in close relation with other races and nations; that is inevitable hereafter. Must the relation be that of superiors commanding the reverence of inferiors? Must some be kept "in their places" as subservient? Professor Burgess quotes a Negro in America as saying:

> We want to be treated as human beings, as citizens with citizens' rights. We expect to be punished when

[8] André Maurois, "Disraeli" (Appleton, 1928), p. 344.

we are wrong, but we want to be protected when we're in the right. We want the freedom of public places. For example, the street is public; in the same way all public places should be open to anyone. . . . If I am hungry, I cannot eat in public places unless served by one of my own people. If I'm thirsty, I cannot drink in any place but one of my own, no matter how I conduct myself, nor how I look. In fact, my race is treated as if it were a race of lepers or rattlesnakes.[9]

Is this racial impertinence? Is this the ultimate relation of races?

Instead, this is clearly meant to be one world, occupied by one human race. A proverb of the Sung school in China says, "The world is one family in which China is one person." Dr. Maclagan counts it a good motto "for a cosmopolitanism in which nationality has its rightful place." At the Third International Conference of American States in Rio de Janeiro, in 1906, Secretary Elihu Root said for the United States:

We wish for no victories but those of peace; for no territory but our own; for no sovereignty except the sovereignty over ourselves. We deem the independence and equal rights of the smallest and weakest member of the family of nations entitled to as much respect as those of the greatest empire, and we deem the observance of that respect the chief guarantee of the weak against the oppression of the strong. We neither claim nor desire any rights, or privileges, or powers that we do not freely concede to every American Republic. We wish to increase our prosperity, to expand our trade, to grow in wealth, in wisdom, and in spirit, but our conception of the true way to ac-

[9] Ernest W. Burgess, "The Urban Community" (University of Chicago Press, 1926), p. 51.

complish this is not to pull down others and profit by their ruin, but to help all friends to a common prosperity and a common growth, that we may all become greater and stronger together.

Is this the practice of nations? Is it supported by the sentiment of the United States itself? Does it not call for protection of the sentiment of the nation? Care for the internal life of each nation becomes more important, since evils spread from one nation to the world. Moral, economic, social evils do not regard national boundary lines, any more than physical plagues regard family lines or state boundaries. We cannot say to a family, "You may have yellow fever if you wish; it is not the business of the rest of us." We cannot even say this to one nation or to one island of the sea. Air, water, commerce, and communication are too universal to allow any evil to remain in a secluded corner. We are all in danger if such things exist anywhere. It is not altogether commerce that is binding the world into a unity. It is also this sense of unavoidable fellowship. An American Foundation is struggling with sleeping sickness in many countries, largely for the relief of the distressed but partly because sleeping sickness is no local matter. The world cannot have it anywhere and not run the risk of having it everywhere.

Does not this answer those who fear that accent on internationalism will imperil nationalism? A patriot has added reasons for care if he knows that the condition of his country concerns all countries.

Consider this word of Ku Hung-ming, one of the old-school statesmen of China, spoken in an interview in the New York Times, November 26, 1927:

The main trouble with Chinese relations to the United States is the fact that America has sent too many of its own pests—what I call the three P's. By this I mean patriots, politicians, and professors. The influence of all three is hurtful or confusing, because not resting on accurate knowledge of conditions. The old-style missionaries who busied themselves with preaching Christianity and with works of mercy were splendid, but most of the new style spend their time teaching "the new learning" and meddling in political affairs that are none of their concern. They are far from splendid. However, even the new-style missionaries, by keeping the hypocrisy of morality alive, prevent the beach-combing and die-hard treaty type of foreigners from going too far. They are like a constant brake on their fellow nationals.

Underneath the cynicism of that utterance, what measure of sound wisdom do you detect? Is it true that local conditions are none of the concern of those who try to befriend other races?

The Christian Religion Magnifies Moral Qualities. International relations involve moral issues to which Christianity cannot be indifferent. They are always endangered by suspicion and fear. Unselfish national action is a fiction to many writers.

Men in Europe are not in the habit of ascribing generous motives to a people. Their own governments excepted, and frequently not that, the other governing bodies and the people themselves go to war or keep out of war, do what they do or leave undone what they leave undone, for no good motive. Greed, the love of power, or folly and madness move nations and decide the events of history. So they think and say. . . . The fact is, outside of England, no one understands America or knows anything about it that is

worth knowing. Their state is one of staggering misinformation.[10]

How far is this different from the American attitude toward other nations? How much do you really understand about Europe or the Far East? If differences arose between Japan or Mexico and our nation, how fully could you enter into their thought of the issue? Count Bernhard von Bülow, in a memorandum presented to William II some time before the last war, said that English politicians "find it difficult to credit really bad intentions in others."[11] Do you find this same difficulty? Or is it easier for you to assign bad motives to others? Can we become fully Christian if we hold other men and their motives in contempt because of our ignorance? And has not the Church a responsibility for developing a spirit of fraternity and fairness that will prevent international injustices and frauds? How can this be done?

The delicacy of international relations appeared in the recent discussion regarding the payment of war loans. Some European leaders felt that the debts should be canceled. Some American sentiment favored it. Others considered this unwise, and a scale of payments was arranged. This started in Europe the insulting phrase, "Uncle Shylock," which is so resented in America. What effect do such incidents have on international relationships? A few years ago, the United States sent as an administrator to the Philippine Islands one of its most distinguished citizens. In this country it was a mere incident that

[10] Langdon E. Mitchell, "Understanding America" (Doran, 1927), p. 30.

[11] Sir Valentine Chirol, "Fifty Years in a Changing World" (Jonathan Cape, 1928), p. 284.

he was an outstanding military figure, but at least one traveler in the Far East was earnestly asked whether this indicated military and imperialistic intentions toward the Far East. If a Japanese warship appears off the coast of South America, many in America assume that it involves a program of military invasion. The suspicion is explicable in view of much in the past, but it is far more frequently unjustified than not. The Christian religion ought to weigh heavily in such situations, drawing men together in finer brotherhood and confidence. Lord Bryce wrote that "history testifies that free governments have prospered only among religious people." [12] The need for religion will be greater still if a free world is to be developed.

The national conscience must be made to react intelligently and dispassionately regarding international relations instead of being daily inoculated with the poisons of blind prejudices, distorted facts, and biased interpretations.[13]

Meanwhile, the Christian faith must safeguard its own activity from selfish national use. There is need for the declaration of the Jerusalem Missionary Conference in April, 1928:

We repudiate any attempt on the part of trade or of governments, openly or covertly, to use the missionary cause for ulterior purposes. Our gospel, by its very nature and by its declarations of the sacredness of personality, stands against all exploitation of men by men, so that we cannot tolerate any

[12] Quoted by R. L. Kelly in "Theological Education in America" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 231.

[13] Paul Périgord, "The International Labor Organization" (Appleton, 1926), p. 10.

desire, conscious or unconscious, to use this movement for purposes of fastening a bondage, economic, political, or social, on any people.

This has always been the principle of missionary leaders.

The Christian Religion Maintains a Scale of Values. The Christian faith takes strong ground against placing things above persons, temporal above eternal values, making nations mere fields of commerce or advantage rather than coöperative human groups.

(*a*) The program of Great Britain in the "opium wars" in China is widely misunderstood, but the fact that it included in a sound commercial development so injurious an item has always been a difficulty in Anglo-Chinese relations. Chinese opinion about it grows violent even to-day. In advancing trade, personalities were not safeguarded. The United States Government has often been asked to protect injurious business because the protection of business in general is legitimate. It has been told that governments cannot discriminate on moral issues. Against this theory the Christian religion must protest. Persons must be considered in all commercial relations.

(*b*) In commerce and diplomacy the elements of profit and national advantage can never be disregarded; they can be sublimated and brought into the field of service. Any nation is better for legitimate commercial and diplomatic relationship with other nations. The net result of the contact of the West with the East has undoubtedly been good for both parties, but the danger of exploiting the weaker groups has not always been avoided.

(*c*) Herein lies the evil of war and of all use of

force for gaining good ends. In an unpublished address Dr. Robert Worth Frank has said:

> We can gain economic ends or material ends by use of force but not spiritual ends. Conquest can add to our territory but not one cubit to our moral stature. By expansion of territory through force we can enrich our coffers but we cannot add to our stock of ideals. Penitentiaries and houses of correction are signal examples of the failure of force to change men. John Dewey's word is true: "We can shut a man up in a penitentiary but we cannot make him penitent." So is Tolstoy's word: "Men think there are circumstances when one may deal with human beings without love. But there are none. You may deal with things without love, cut trees, bake bricks, hammer iron, but you cannot deal with men without love."

War disregards or abuses personality. It turns persons into means, whereas for Christian thinking they are ends.

(*d*) Attention has been called to the progress of ideas in the Bible regarding this. At the earliest stage a hero announces that he has slain a man for merely wounding him and a young man for merely bruising him, Gen. 4:23. This indicates how a man may protect his rights, exacting sevenfold for any offense committed against him. In the Mosaic code, this severity was forbidden; offense and punishment were to be balanced: an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, Ex. 21:24, with no revenge in the punishment. But Jesus showed that this moderated saying is far from his idea; his disciples are to love their enemies and do good to those who use them badly, Matt. 5:44. In the Garden of Gethsemane he told

Peter to put up his sword, saying that it was his duty and choice "to drink the cup," Matt. 26:42, 52. It is as difficult for a nation to choose the cup instead of the sword as it is for individuals. Christian believers ought to furnish influence in that direction.

The Christian Religion Accents Personal Obligation. (*a*) A serious problem of personal duty arises when a national course seems not Christian. How far ought a person to support his nation simply because it is his nation and he owes so much to it? If the nation adopts a policy which he cannot approve, goes into an unjust war, or any war at all, what is his duty? Even if he decides not to support it actively, ought he to oppose it actively? The last war awakened much discussion, and some Christian believers have declared that they will not sustain any further war, counting it essentially not Christian. Others have made less decided announcements. Still others have left their future actions open to future decisions, while declaring definite Christian opposition to war. Probably in this as in most vital ethical problems no one can finally decide for another, but the principle is clear—the principle of the supreme place of personality and the duty to regard others above ourselves. Whatever may be said of past wars, the conditions that now surround the world make wars wasteful, not chiefly of money but of manhood, of morality, of values too high to be restored by any aftergains of war. When the Christian nations set themselves against this way of settling differences it will cease.

(*b*) A similar personal problem emerges when evils appear in other nations. Should Christian people in one land be indifferent to the presence of hurt-

ful evils in other lands? Can it ever be the duty of one nation to interfere in the affairs of another in the interest of its people and their advancement? Is such action always hypocritical? On what grounds can the action of the United States in Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippine Islands after the Spanish-American War be justified? How much should Christian people have to say about American methods in Mexico and other parts of Latin America? Do they serve good ends? Suppose a Christian comes to disbelieve in all such methods; what is then his duty? By the restriction of immigration into the United States, especially as it affects the Japanese, American Christians in the Far East have been put to severe test. Some have been silent in loyalty to a government to which they owe allegiance. Some have made active opposition to the acts, denouncing the government for their existence. Which took the Christian position?

(*c*) Difficult as the particular case always is when it actually arises, it is possible in cold blood to maintain some principles for guidance in emergencies. (1) It is clear that one's duty to God is above all else. The early disciples urged this as a matter of course, Acts 4:19; 5:29. When the issue is so plain that one sees God's will, it must be followed at any cost. The objection must of course be kept on this high plane of duty to God and not be urged as mere personal opinion or dislike. (2) It is clear also that a man must not insist that the whole nation abandon its convictions for his position unless it can be brought to do so by suitable means. If he has to clash with

it, he must take the consequences without whimpering or complaining, until he can bring his fellows to see his reasons as valid. He can protest against injustice and severity, but he cannot expect that those who differ from him will suddenly change on his account, and if they think that he is interfering with what they see as vital interests he must expect to be treated accordingly. This is one way in which public opinion is changed. One man pays the price for higher ideals which are gradually accepted in the group.

(*d*) One may need at times to go against the popular opinion regarding other nations and races. Jesus offended many of his own race by his friendliness with others. The "publicans" or Jewish tax collectors for the Roman Government were held to be renegade, unpatriotic, ignoble, yet Jesus consorted with them, Matt. 9:11. The Samaritans were a mixed race peculiarly offensive to the more patriotic Jews, yet Jesus visited them and used a Samaritan in one of his most effective parables, Luke 10:33. He welcomed Greeks and Romans and served them without distinction. The record does not indicate that this fact entered directly into his condemnation, but it certainly helped to build up the popular and official prejudice which made his execution so easy. He could say patriotic things readily because he believed them, John 4:22, but any narrow or self-sufficient nationalism is unthinkable in connection with Jesus. His followers are citizens of particular nations but they are members of one human race for which their Master cares without limit. One of their constant problems is to find worthy ways for expressing the spirit of their Master in their national connections.

The Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Council made this solemn acknowledgment:

> We believe that the gospel proclaims the only way by which humanity can escape from class and race hatred. But we are forced to recognize that such a claim requires to be made good and that the record of Christendom hitherto is not sufficient to sustain it. . . . We call on all Christian people to be ready for pioneering thought and action in the name of Christ. Too often the Church has adopted new truth, or new goals for enterprise, only when the danger attached to them is over. There is a risk of rashness; but there is also possible an excessive caution by which, because his Church hangs back, the glory of new truth or enterprise which rightly belongs to Christ is in men's thoughts denied to him.[14]

The need for this daring in behalf of truth is nowhere more marked than in national policies and international relations.

Further Suggested Reading

E. Stanley Jones, "Christ at the Round Table" (Abingdon Press), Chapter XII.

Reinhold Niebuhr, "Does Civilization Need Religion?" (Macmillan, 1927).

Jerusalem Conference Report (International Missionary Council, New York, 1928), Vol. IV, Chapter VIII and throughout the volume.

"Building International Good Will," by various writers (Macmillan, 1927), Parts III, IV.

S. Parkes Cadman, "Christianity and the State" (Macmillan, 1924), Chapters I, II.

James A. Robertson, "Jesus the Citizen" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928).

[14] Report of Jerusalem Conference, Vol. I, pp. 407, 408.

Suggestions for Study VI

This study discusses the relation of Christian belief to the practices of Christian churches and the duty of Christian believers regarding these practices.

Do the notes seem to you to imply more criticism of the Church than is right or wise? Ought the Church to be subject to criticism? What would Paul say to that? What people have best right to judge the Church? Do you agree to the statement that the Church is the most Christian institution in the world? What is its relation to the Kingdom of which we have been thinking?

1. Some dangers of the Church.

a. Magnifying organization more than inner life. Compare the Roman Church and the Quakers here. From what did Jesus "cleanse" the temple? Discuss James's statement about devices for raising money in the church. How does your own church use such things?

b. Losing the balance of truth; specializing on one phase of it and neglecting other phases. Illustrate with possible attitudes toward natural science. Suggest some doctrines which might be overemphasized to the neglect of others.

c. Becoming overexclusive, losing Christ's spirit of brotherhood. Show this possibility socially and creedally.

d. Restricting effort to one phase of duty, neglecting other phases. Four illustrations of this danger.

2. The problem of personal responsibility.

What ought a Church member to do if he feels that his Church is neglecting some duty or following a mistaken course? The problem of maintaining complete loyalty to his Christian faith and also to the Church which is set to express the faith. Think out Bishop Brent's comparison between conference and controversy. To which do your churches and religious friends incline?

Are there other dangers of the Church which need to be discussed, not covered by these items?

Notebook: Write a somewhat detailed description of your own church, or of some other in your community or well known to you, stating whether it is falling into any of the dangers discussed or others that you may have added, and what efforts are being made to bring it back to its duty. Substitute for this, if you desire, a statement of the success of your church or some other in avoiding these dangers and accomplishing its full work, and how you conceive that it has succeeded.

STUDY VI

CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND THE PRACTICES OF CHRISTIAN CHURCHES

Distinction between "the Christian Church" and "the Christian churches" may be disregarded here because the only Christian Church we know exists in the form of Christian churches. If one wishes to be effectively connected with the Christian Church to-day he has to decide upon some particular church and function through it. The distinction is academic rather than practical.

At the same time, just because there are particular, and thus far partial, Christian churches, it is possible for them to adopt practices with which the Christian faith is in conflict, and Christian believers may be compelled to stand against these practices in the interest of the faith itself. This duty is naturally most marked regarding one's own church, and it may be greatly abused.

Everything turns on the standard that is used in the criticism. The Church cannot accept the standards of the world and yet remain true to Christ. The element in the world that crucified the Founder of the faith is still to be found and it will always condemn the Church for being its best self. The Church is *in* the world, as Christ was *in* the world, but it is

not intended to be *of* the world, John 17:16. It is here because the world needs it and if it becomes merely part of the world's life, with no creative or transforming power, it has no adequate excuse for existing. It is not here to accommodate itself to society but to transform society into relationships worthy of the Kingdom of God. There is no equal give and take between the Church and the world. A young woman once asked Benjamin Jowett, Master of Balliol College, Oxford, what he thought about God. He replied, "Madam, that is wholly unimportant; the only thing that signifies is what God thinks about me." It is important, of course, to discover what the world thinks about the Church, but we are far more concerned with what the Church does about the world. It is here to serve the world and for that reason it needs to know the world and to hear what the world says about it.

A magazine article recently spoke of "heckling the Church" as a popular indoor sport. Since the Church is a public institution anyone claims a right to criticize it, but the criticisms of some men will have far more worth than those of others because they have some stake in it. They understand not only what it is trying to do but the limitations under which it works. Criticisms from the inside are more valuable than those from the outside. Yet it is never safe to slight the outside criticisms.

Whatever its faults, the Church is the most Christian institution in the world to-day. It is the most widespread voluntary institution of human society, existing in its various forms in nearly all lands and

involving the lives of multitudes of people of all races. Its object is always larger than any achievement it accomplishes, and the spirit it professes to embody is always its severest test. No institution of society sets for itself so large a task, holding itself responsible for so much of human life. The very wealth of its opportunity constitutes one of its dangers in any community. There is always more than it can do and it is tempted to reduce its endeavors to its abilities instead of broadening its abilities until it can meet its opportunity.

The Church is the human society by which and in which the purpose of God in Christ and through Christ must and shall find its fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is the supreme end, but the Church is the essential means. . . . This is the Church's double task, to win disciples and through them to hasten the Kingdom of God.[1]

It is a unique institution, surpassing all the usual limitations of geography and race, making a brotherhood around the world. Robertson Smith, the Scotch theologian, counted its very idea a new epoch in human history. Until the time of Isaiah, he says:

No one had dreamed of a fellowship of faith disassociated from all national forces, bound together by a faith in the divine Word alone. It was the birth of a new era in religion, for it was the birth of the conception of the Church, the first step in the emancipation of spiritual religion from the forces of political life.[2]

[1] Alfred E. Garvie, "Christian Doctrine of the Godhead" (Doran, 1925), pp. 382, 409.

[2] Quoted by Gaius G. Atkins in "The Making of the Christian Mind" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 9.

Not everybody would put the birth of the idea of the Church so far back in history but all would agree on the significance of the idea itself.

The Scripture phrase is that the Church is the body of Christ, Eph. 1:23, and "the pillar and ground of the truth," I Tim. 3:15. That is, the Church gives present reality to the spirit of Christ, making that spirit effective, as our bodies represent our spirits before men, and it is also the instrument whereby certain truths are maintained in human thought. What would happen in your community if the churches were to disappear entirely? Cynics sometimes say that it would be an advantage. Why do you count them mistaken?

The importance of the Church's function makes it well for those who love it to be critical of it. Wholesale condemnation and wholesale praise are equally unhelpful. Christianity is greater than any one expression of it, greater than any Church, and by it every Church is to be tested.

Some Dangers of the Church. Christ loves the Church and gave himself for it, Eph. 5:25, but it is always possible that a particular church may become so unworthy of its name as to become repulsive to Christ. In at least two early Scripture instances—at Ephesus, Rev. 2:5, and at Laodicea, Rev. 3:16—churches are sharply condemned as having lost their right to be known as Christian. The faults are those of their members. Even in the midst of those failing churches there were members who might bring about a correction. The deadest churches have individual members who bemoan their condition. And when a church is corrupt and ineffective it means that its

ranking people are so; other people may be sound. This is common to all institutions. A case occurs in Scripture where the social order had become corrupt and all that well-meaning men could do was to sigh and cry over the evils, Ezek. 9:4, but even this was recognized as of ethical value. A church is merely its members, but its dominating spirit may be better or worse than some of them.

Criticism does not necessarily mean less love for the Church, nor disbelief in its sacred mission. Paul's letters to the Corinthians are evidence of this. Cynical men to-day turn from the Church as though it were a complete failure, while the evils they point out are far less glaring and offensive than those with which Paul was dealing. Love and loyalty may sharpen one's adverse judgments. An institution with such opportunities must not be allowed to drift along unjudged. Let us think of four major dangers from which we who love the Church must pray and labor to safeguard it.

1. *Overmagnifying organization.* Any Church may magnify forms of organization to the neglect of the inner life. Churches differ in the stress they lay on organization, the Roman Catholic at one extreme identifying the organization with the Church itself, the Friends at the other disregarding organization almost entirely. Most of us are strung along the path between the two. We think of the Christian religion as a spirit requiring expression in a form, and of the Christian life as requiring a social outlet which is of the nature of an institution. Organization is not a necessary evil; it is a great asset of the Christian faith.

(*a*) But it may throttle the inner spirit which it is intended to express. William Penn thought that it had gone very far in his day (1644-1718) when the Society of Friends was founded:

> Christ's enemies are now chiefly those of his own profession. In the Church we find only a by-rote *mumpsimus,* a dull and insipid formality, made up of corporeal bowings and cringings, garments and furniture, perfumes, voices, and music, fitter for the reception of some earthly prince than the heavenly worship of the one true and immortal God, who is an eternal, invisible Spirit.

In the Friends' Conference (1895), one of the speakers said:

> What is a Friend but one who, illuminated by the quickening Spirit, has learned to cast off the incrustations which ignorance and intellectual pride or intellectual folly have during the centuries built up around the simple core of Christ's teaching?[3]

But is not this what any Christian ought to seek to do all the time? Zeal to keep the machinery going may leave no strength for the Church's main task. Societies and meetings and programs may seem to have value in themselves when they have ceased to render any real service. It requires high courage to allow a time-honored institution or custom to die, though it may be already dead so far as any real service goes. Every live church needs to take stock of its organization sometimes to see whether it is all worth while.

(*b*) Pressure of organization explains the tendency to commercialize the Church. Its business aspect needs

[3] Quoted by William R. Inge in "The Church in the World" (Longmans, 1927), pp. 72, 91.

no defense. Sensible persons know it has such a side. But this side may be improperly magnified. Jesus' cleansing of the Temple, Mark 11:15-17, was aimed partly at corruption in the necessary business and partly at the intrusion of the business side into areas from which it should have been excluded. Business plans may crowd out the spirit of prayer. Calling for money at all services may dull the spirit of worship and make churchgoing a burden instead of a joy. Is there not something wrong when a sincere person says that he cannot afford to go to church? Is this always affectation and excuse, or can there be legitimate ground for it? Are there not ways of financing a Church without harassing people? How can the modern Church carry out its heavy building program with subsequent maintenance costs, without slackening on the unselfish enterprises which are its main business? Could anyone in your community justly sneer at the churches as being "always after money"? An American philosopher said several years ago:

> When a church has to be run by oysters, ice cream, and fun, you may be sure that it is running away from Christ. Such, if one may judge by appearances, is the present plight of many of our churches.[4]

Notice that the question is not about the using of these things in the course of the Church's life of fellowship, but about the wisdom of making them a means of support, of raising the money on which the Church depends in this way. Can you think out the objection to doing so? How do you feel about the tendency to add popular features to church equip-

[4] William James, "Varieties of Religious Experience" (Longmans, 1917), p. 365. New Edition, 1928 (reprint).

ment and methods? Are they proving quite helpful to those to whom they are addressed? Are they advancing the program of the Church as a representative of the spirit of Christ?

2. *Losing the balance of truth.* Any church may lose its balance of truth, stressing some aspects and disregarding others, elevating secondary and incidental phases into primary and essential place. It may do this in its terms of admission or in its attitude toward other groups.

(*a*) The Church is not a body of those who have already attained but of those who are following after, Phil. 3:12-14. At its door it can propose only such tests as reveal the spirit of those who seek to enter. If it establishes its tests on the theory that every society has the right to determine its membership, it may be urged that the Church is to be a society of Christians and that any Christian ought to be at home in any church of Christ. Is this the true principle?

(*b*) Churches are not originators of the truth but its trustees, and they are not at liberty to take or leave any part of it on their own motion. Yet in the circle of truth some items are primary and some secondary. Some truths are fair tests of fellowship; others are subject to discussion among intimate brethren. How much agreement must be demanded before a church can count others brethren in Christ? The familiar verse, "Shall two walk together, except they have agreed?" Amos 3:3, is intended as a call to fellowship. Amos means that two people cannot walk together unless they have agreed on at least something, and if they find themselves walking together they

ought to find out where they agree. The fact is that Christian churches are walking together in many paths, serving and working together. Then they must be agreed on some points. Our task is to find out how much we already hold in common.

(*c*) The Church is sharply criticized to-day for its attitude toward new scientific truth or theory. How far can the Church set its vision of the world over against the discoveries or supposed discoveries of scientific students? Is the Church's vision of the world worth considering or is it so authoritative that nothing else is worth considering? Dr. Pupin, himself an active Christian, says that the real issue is between authority and the liberty of investigation.[5] Other equally earnest believers explain the conflict in various ways, but such scientists as Dr. Edwin E. Slosson, Dr. J. Arthur Thomson, Dr. James Young Simpson, remind us that whenever the Church has come into conflict with scientific forces in recent years the Church has had to recede from its positions—an unpleasant idea for us who love it. The next few decades will test the Church severely in its relation to psychology and history and ethics. One need not surrender to every new idea that is proposed, but it is idle to set up against a new idea an authoritative claim with which it does not really conflict. There are more abandoned theories in science than in theology, because scientific men prefer a new theory to an old, while theological men tend to reverse this preference. Our fathers protested against the Copernican idea of a round and moving earth. It seemed

[5] Michael I. Pupin, "The New Reformation" (Scribners, 1927), Chapter I.

to conflict with important religious truths. When we see both the new and the old as they really are, we find that they supplement each other so that each is enriched.

3. *Becoming overexclusive.* Any church may lose its eagerness for Christian brotherhood and become more exclusive than Christ himself. All denominations have some distinctive elements of the faith for which they stand but they never think of themselves as devoted solely to any particular element. They always seek to be to their members all that a complete Christian Church can be, expressing the whole of the faith. The point which they accent is conceived as a neglected point but not as the entire Christian religion. Every Church offers itself to the world as a spiritual home for all who truly accept the faith and following of Christ. As time goes on, this distinctive element grows more prominent, and becomes a test of brotherhood. One of the vital problems of Church unity emerges here. May we say that though a certain man is doubtless acceptable with God yet he cannot become part of our Church unless he alters his position at some point? That is, has any Christian Church the right to exclude from its membership anyone whom it counts a Christian? We would never say that a man must be a member of our Church, or of any other Church, in order to be saved or in order to be a true Christian. So we are not shutting a man out of heaven or out of fellowship with God when we refuse him place in our Church. But, even so, is it not a serious thing to say to one whom we admit to be in Christ's fellowship that we cannot admit him to ours because of something which

we count essential, while yet we agree that Christ seems not to count it essential to his fellowship? There is a great deal to say on both sides of the question. Some would dispute its form. Consider it carefully and determine your own answer. Keep in mind the value of Church membership as a fellowship without which some phases of the Christian faith cannot be expressed, and try to frame a principle on which a Church can be justified in becoming more exclusive in its fellowship than Christ is in his. Notice, also, that the issue is not of authoritative leadership, nor of right to become a teacher in the Church. It is wholly a question of membership, of the right of fellowship in a given body of believers who bear the name of Christ. Keep in mind also the duty of the Church to bear witness to truth which it holds in trust, so that it is not free to dispense with its real requirements.

On the same line, does it seem logical for Churches to welcome each other as composed of fellow Christians and yet to refuse organic union? On what principle can this be justified? Suppose that a man came from another church in your community and wanted to join your church, would he not probably be accepted as a Christian? Would not one of your members be accepted as a Christian in any other church in the community? What churches would refuse this exchange of members on a purely Christian basis? Can you get their point of view so that you sympathize with it? Can you think out good reasons why those churches which will now exchange members should not come together as a whole? Do they remain apart for purposes of efficiency and

merely to serve particular groups in society, or is it because they think that the other churches are not so fully loyal to Christ as they themselves seek to be? There is a growing fellowship even across very dogmatic lines. Many believers would be ashamed to limit their Christian fraternity to their own churches while the great Church of Christ stands all about them, filled with believers whom they can trust and love.

How little this relation among churches is understood can be guessed from a comment of a prominent American paper on the election of officers of a business corporation. It says that "the election showed the lack of the influence of religion in American business," since the president is an Episcopalian, the executive head is a Roman Catholic, and the fiscal head is a Quaker. If the Episcopalians allow a Catholic and a Quaker to be elected and these others allow an Episcopalian to be elected, it must be for lack of religion! That it might be because of a proper amount of religion, all these being phases of the one Christian faith, does not occur to the paper. If it had resulted that none but Episcopalians or none but Roman Catholics were elected, what would that have proved? Would it have been an evidence of the vitality of the Church or of its narrowness?

4. *Narrowing Church responsibility.* The Church may restrict its effort to one phase of its responsibility, neglecting other phases. (*a*) This is apt to appear most sharply when the question arises about service for individuals and social duties of the Church. An independent American minister said that "Christianity has, in all ages down to our own,

forgotten the cause of humanity for the petty and picayune cause of saving the individual man."

Of course that is not true, but severe criticisms are seldom entirely accurate. What measure of truth do you see in it? How do you explain the delay of the Church in undertaking social service and in trying to correct the evil conditions that surround so many lives? Do you think that this is really the Church's business? The latest biography of Disraeli explains the condition of religion in England in 1839, when he was a young man:

> For forty years the Church had shown a greater dread of faith than of indifference. The young men were weary of those cathedrals with their closed doors and those icy services; some went as far as Rome, others struggled to introduce warmer rites into their own Church. At Cambridge [some men] had assumed the task of learning the sufferings of the mass of people and seeking the remedies.[6]

Recall the history of foreign missionary effort. The call to such service is found in all parts of the Bible. Yet for centuries men read the Bible, and claimed to obey it, and remained utterly indifferent to the rest of the world. When a few zealots began to talk foreign missions, important leaders silenced them, saying that God could attend to the heathen without their interference. That day is past and we take foreign missions for granted in all intelligent Church gatherings. Only belated people discuss the obligation; the rest of us discuss nothing but methods.

But here is this social aspect of our faith. It is earnestly denied by some believers. They think that

[6] André Maurois, "Disraeli" (Appleton, 1928), pp. 160, 161.

it means neglect of the earlier and vital task of seeking individuals for Christ. Of course every sincere Christian welcomes any movement that aids the temporal lives of men, cares for little children, relieves the distressed, and lifts the fallen. That is not the issue. Is this the business of the Church as such? Ought the Church to undertake permanent corrective work, changing conditions from which injury comes, or should this wait for some further development of the program of God which will care for it, leaving us the single duty of making Christ known to individuals?

Certainly insistence on this larger aspect is recent. But it grows on believers as necessary if the full religion of Christ is to be presented and applied in the world. The rescue of injured men is too obvious a duty to be discussed. If it lies in our power to remove the cause of further injury, that would seem equally obvious. When it is said that the purpose of the gospel does not include the redemption of society, the reply is that since it has the capacity for that work and lacks only dedicated energy on the part of its adherents, it seems logical to attempt it. Success in this as in everything else comes from the power of God working in his truth, but the efforts and attempts are our part. Careful study of the Bible reveals this duty and our children will wonder that we missed it, as we wonder that our fathers missed the missionary obligation.

(*b*) The Church may fail also by standing silent before great evils in the world. Like all organized bodies it moves slowly, and sometimes it seems negligent of moral issues because its deliverance appears

so much later than their emergence. Individual believers are often far in advance of the main body of the Church, their lives having been thrown directly in the line of progress. An earnest critic, who has been active in Near East relief and other lines of foreign service, says contemptuously that "the world brotherhood of Church-trained people of to-day is a monstrosity." How far is such strong language justified in the attitude of Church-trained people toward the members of other races? If your highest Church court makes strong declaration of concern for other races and their rights, how far does this command your own sympathetic support? How much does your own group care about the oppressed religious minorities in Europe, about the increase of political corruption in American cities, about industrial disturbances that involve moral issues, about racial injustices? If your own life is thrown intimately into relation to any of these matters, does the Church seem hesitant in its utterances and actions?

(*c*) The Church may fail in the presence of great problems of social life. How about the matter of amusements? Some leaders have only a program of withdrawal. A few smaller Churches have adopted rules forbidding their young people to attend moving-picture shows; many forbid dancing and theatergoing—taking negative positions. Does this seem to you wise and adequate? The tendency of churches is to a much less adverse attitude at all these points. Some of them provide amusement under their own auspices: church dances, moving-picture entertainments, theaters. Others try to exercise censorship over commercialized forms of amusement, supervis-

ing dance halls, certifying or condemning particular moving pictures and plays. Are these plans better than opposition or indifference? What ought to be the attitude of believers toward the Church here?

(*d*) The Church may confine its interest to local affairs, neglecting larger interests. What percentage of the people of your own church have an intelligent idea of foreign missions or any deep-rooted conviction regarding it? Some of them may pride themselves on zeal for local phases of religious duty and speak contemptuously of duty to far-away people. What proportion ought the local budget of the church to bear to its benevolence budget? Which part is easier to raise in your church? Suppose it were suggested that your church give away as much as it spends on itself, or that it spend thirty-five per cent on itself and give away sixty-five per cent, how would it be accepted? In short, where is your church laying its accent and what accent is it neglecting?

The Problem of Personal Responsibility. Thoughtful Christian believers face the problem of personal responsibility here. Suppose that one comes to believe that his Church is wrong or defective on vital matters; what shall he do? Suppose that a minister differs from his Church at some point which others count more vital than he does; ought he to leave its ministry? How far should other people's judgment of what loyalty requires determine his own course? Would a young man be justified in entering the ministry of a Church from which he differs at points which others count important but which he does not think important in comparison with the points at which he agrees with it? Suppose that

a believer finds no Church with which he wholly agrees in creed or practice; would he be justified in uniting with the one that comes nearest to his understanding of the Christian truth? Is there any other way in which he can take an effective part in the program of the Kingdom of God? Some believers grow critical and refuse to be part of any Church; is this a wise course? If a believer hears his minister say things with which he does not agree, even betraying what he considers the truth of the gospel, what ought he to do? Shall he leave his Church, bearing his witness by remaining outside or by entering another Church? Or may he remain within the Church, bearing his testimony of protest in suitable ways, meanwhile examining his own ideas to be sure that they are more fully Christian than the expressions that grieve him? What would you do yourself under these conditions?

Certainly if defects or failings or evils in it were sufficient reason for withholding one's interest or one's membership, there would have been no Church from the very first. It has never been a wholly worthy representative of Christ. Always it has had hypocrites, false guides, timorous leaders, halting machinery. Yet it has always been the spiritual home of godly men who have had to endure these things or leave the Church. There is something arrogant in the mood of the man who leaves the Church because of its defects. Has he no defect himself? Is he so wonderful in his loyalty to Christ that he cannot remain in fellowship with other professed Christians? Have the people of your community who have withdrawn from their church proved themselves such ex-

ceptional Christians as to justify their course? The easy way has always been to wipe one's hands of responsibility and take the place of a critic. The hard way has always been to find a feasible method within one's own church for bringing about a change for the better and then to settle down patiently and earnestly to make things better. This results in bringing out the values of the existing Church; the other course brings out its faults all the more clearly, hiding its values. One who loves the Church, and is loyal to it, sees its faults but rejoices in its values. One who is contemptuous of the Church sees its faults but discounts its pretended virtues. The history of the Church is the noblest of any institution or organization of society. Jesus once spoke of the fact that a net cast into the sea brings up all sorts of fish and other sea life, part of which is undesirable, Matt. 13:47, 48. He said that the Kingdom of heaven is like that: it picks up all sorts of people. It is not until the end, as when the fisherman reaches the shore, that the bad are separated from the good. There are always observers who would throw the whole net away when they see the wrong fish in it, but they are premature. It is the Church, made up as it actually has been of all sorts of people, which has kept the faith of Christ alive in the world. Even when some have withdrawn from it, they have formed other Churches in loyalty to Christ or else they have faded away from the scene and have no longer counted in the constructive forces of the Kingdom of God.

Sincere believers are not called to approve all the practices of any Church and may sometimes be called to oppose them. Yet they may remain in the Church

loyally while they are allowed the true liberty of children of God. When that liberty is denied, they may have to set out on a fresh path, assured of God's guidance.

The outstanding Christian duty just now is that of conference and mutual understanding. Bishop Brent's sermon, opening the Lausanne Conference, set out the difference between conference and controversy in striking terms:

> Conference is a measure of peace; controversy, a weapon of war. Conference is self-abasing; controversy exalts self. Conference in all lowliness strives to understand the viewpoint of others; controversy, to impose its views on all comers. Conference looks for unities; controversy exaggerates differences. Conference is a coöperative method for conflict; controversy, a divisive method. I do not say that there may not be occasions when controversy may be necessary. This is not one of them.[7]

The three great conferences, at Stockholm (1925), at Lausanne (1927), and at Jerusalem (1928), are auguries of a day of better understanding among Christian Churches regarding both their faith and their work.

FURTHER SUGGESTED READING

Roger W. Babson, "New Tasks for Old Churches" (Revell, 1922).

Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, Chapter VII (latter half).

Durant Drake, "Shall We Stand by the Church?" (Macmillan, 1920).

"The Problem of Christian Unity" (Macmillan, 1921). Edited by Frederick Lynch.

Albert W. Beaven, "Putting the Church on a Full Time Basis" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), especially the Foreword.

[7] "Faith and Order," Report of Lausanne Conference (Doubleday, Doran, 1927), p. 4.

Suggestions for Study VII

This study discusses the relation of the Christian religion to other religions. Sometimes, in zeal for their faith, Christian believers object to admitting that other "religions" are real religions. What do you think about it?

Probably in your own community the Christian faith is more opposed by irreligion than by other religions. This irreligion takes two forms. Which is more common in the circle you know best?

Does Dr. Stanley Jones's statement of world religions correspond to what you had thought about them? Where does Christianity stand in point of age?

Three attitudes toward other religions: indifference, intolerance, intelligence. Which attitude prevails in your circle? Are you sympathetic with the idea of conferences of the different religions, such as the Parliament of Religions at the World's Fair of 1893 and later conventions? What are your reasons?

Why is it so difficult to estimate other religions fairly?

1. Some common fields of religions.

Study the six points carefully. Do they represent what you had thought about the world religions? Is it necessary to know other religions before one can rightly be satisfied with his own?

2. Distinguishing elements in the Christian religion.

Study the seven points carefully. Do they seem to you as important as the points in common? Which of them had you thought of as the principal element in your own Christian experience? Do you need to add any others? Which would you name as the outstanding element in the faith?

Notebook: Write a statement of the way the people of your nearest group think about the great non-Christian religions and show whether or how their thought could be changed without causing a loss of Christian conviction. Let the statement include also your own thought about them, carefully observing whether your opinion is compatible with Christ's command to give his religion to all the world, though at that time as truly as now everybody already had a religion. Take time to make some inquiries of your friends about their thought on the subject.

STUDY VII

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION AND OTHER RELIGIONS

CHRISTIANITY could never hope to have a clear field for expansion. It is a redemptive faith—conditions are to be changed. It appeared late in history—other religions were already here. Besides divisions among its own adherents, it has had two chief problems: (1) irreligion and (2) other religions.

Irreligion. Irreligion sometimes denies the validity of all religion, counting it a stage of human progress to be passed as the race advances. It lists historical religions on a rising scale, but takes the attitude that as each disappears before a better, so all will ultimately disappear. Two eminent Western lecturers assured the Chinese recently that religion is losing its hold in the West and that they could enter the new day without traveling any such path. Occasional instructors in our own universities advise students to abandon religious ideas as outgrown. But the necessity of religion and its permanent place in human life can be strongly argued, as has been done in such recent books as Dr. John Baillie's "The Roots of Religion in the Human Soul,"[1] Professor William P. Paterson's "The Nature of Religion,"[2] Professor

[1] Doran, 1926.
[2] Harpers, 1928.

Clement F. Rogers' "The Case for Christianity,"[3] and Professor Reinhold Niebuhr's "Does Civilization Need Religion?"[4] Forms of religion change, but its substance is not surpassed and men do not maintain permanently right relations with each other without sense of the higher obligations which are implied in religion.

Irreligion is more commonly mere neglect, preoccupation with other interests, and low opinion of religious claims. In your own circle or community many people seem never to be concerned for religion or any of its values, except in crises. When do they go to church? When do they pray? When do they think or speak of God, and in what terms? Visitors or inquirers from non-Christian lands are always surprised at the number of indifferent or antagonistic people in Christendom, whose knowledge of Christianity is negligible. If an Indian lecturer in America said that the Indians are deserting Hinduism, we would assume that he knew. When an American told the Indian people recently that Christianity is dying out in America, the Indians took it as true. That a man may be in a Christian land and be wholly out of personal relation to Christianity seems to Indians quite impossible. But Christianity has always had to meet local irreligion.

Other Religions. In its world program Christianity finds religions in all lands. Each of them seeks in its own way to serve the religious needs of humanity. It is no reflection on a religion to offer another. The new religion frankly recognizes the

[3] Doran, 1925.
[4] Macmillan, 1927.

needs which the existing religion seeks to serve; it offers itself as a better way of serving them.

World religions are difficult to classify. They can be characterized more helpfully. Dr. E. Stanley Jones, the missionary in India, holds intimate relations with adherents of other faiths and is always eager to see their values. This is his outline:

> Greece said, Be moderate—know thyself;
> Rome said, Be strong—order thyself;
> Confucianism says, Be superior—correct thyself;
> Shintoism says, Be loyal—suppress thyself;
> Buddhism says, Be disillusioned—annihilate thyself;
> Hinduism says, Be separated—merge thyself;
> Islam says, Be submissive—assert thyself;
> Judaism says, Be holy—conform thyself;
> Modern materialism says, Be industrious—enjoy thyself;
> Modern dilletantism says, Be broad—cultivate thyself;
> Christianity says, Be Christlike—give thyself.[5]

Like all characterizations this must be taken understandingly. In most cases the expression would be acceptable to adherents of the faith.

Religions range from the crude animism of primitive populations to the refined and highly philosophical forms of Hinduism among the ablest peoples of India. Christianity is next to the youngest of the major religions, only Islam (Mohammedanism) being of later origin (A.D. 622). The others preceded it by centuries, as Buddhism, Judaism, Confucianism, or by millenniums as in the case of Hinduism. They can be grouped according to their ideas of God, the

[5] E. Stanley Jones, "The Christ of the Indian Road" (Abingdon Press, 1925), pp. 39, 40.

human soul, the future, present duty. But they must be recognized as sincere programs of earnest men to secure the results which religion ought to bring—pardon for the past, peace for the present, power for the future.

Attitudes Toward Other Religions. Religious adherents take three attitudes [6] toward other religions.

1. *Indifference.* The majority of men take this attitude toward most of the world. They have flashes or moments of interest, aroused by curiosity about some peculiarity, a strange custom or an unusual practice. But most people do not really care about those who are far from their immediate circle. Their own religion means either so much to them that they cannot imagine any other or so little that they do not care to extend it to anyone else. If a series of studies were announced in your community, discussing the great religions of the world, how many people would attend?

2. *Intolerance.* To many adherents other religions are pitiable affairs, revealing chiefly how foolish people can be in such matters. One's own religion is of course the wise religion; the others are suited only to belated or superstitious people. Paul once urged, Gal. 6:1, a spirit of meekness, instead of superiority and lofty magnanimity. That spirit is essential in thinking of other religions. Lack of it leads to exceedingly offensive blunders. This occurred in Alaska:

A program was arranged for the "whites" by the Eskimos. This consisted in part of dances of various

[6] On all this section there is much material in Daniel J. Fleming's "Attitudes Toward Other Faiths" (Association Press, 1928).

sorts. The whites decided to give a series of prizes for the best dancing in each group. They were distributed among the men and women. This seemed to put a damper on the proceedings. The evening broke up with savage grumbling and muttering among the natives which the whites could not understand. A young Eskimo leader came to Mr. Snow with "anger burning in his eyes." He said: "Mr. Snow, do you know you have spoiled our Christmas by your prizes? Don't you understand? Those dances are our religion. Giving prizes is all the same as giving prizes in a white man's prayer meeting for white men who make the best prayer."[7]

Any country could furnish similar experiences. Religious practices are difficult to interpret. A missionary in Siam noticed that her new servant regularly placed a small bunch of flowers in her husband's chair; the servant thought that the carved back of the chair was the household god, since the missionary always knelt before it to offer family prayers. The flowers were a votive offering. Why not? A writer in The Century Magazine, July, 1928, warns us wisely:

> The superior, condescending, and stubbornly ignorant point of view of most religious organizations toward everybody and everything outside their own particular creed is a point of view intellectually and spiritually impossible.

Unhappily, it is not so impossible as it is common.

3. *Intelligence, or sympathetic understanding.* It involves an effort to enter into the meaning of other religions. This is all the more difficult because no religion can mean so much to an observer as to an adherent. But it is possible to maintain a fraternal

[7] Book Notes, December, 1927.

spirit and to believe that in all religions there is an element of the witness of God. See how the Scripture writers felt about it: Ps. 24:3-5; Acts 14:15-17; 17:23-28; Rom. 1:19, 20; 2:14, 15. There are evils connected with world religions, but it is not their evils that hold their adherents. The Jerusalem meeting of the International Missionary Conference (April, 1928), appealed to non-Christians in these terms:

> We rejoice to think that just because in Jesus Christ the light that lighteneth every man shone forth in its full splendor, we find rays of that same light where he is unknown or even is rejected. We welcome every noble quality in non-Christian persons or systems as further proof that the Father, who sent his own Son into the world, has nowhere left himself without witness. Thus, merely to give illustration, and making no attempt to estimate the spiritual value of other religions to their adherents, we recognize as part of the one Truth that sense of the majesty of God and the consequent reverence in worship, which are conspicuous in Islam; the deep sympathy for the world's sorrow and unselfish search for the way of escape, which are at the heart of Buddhism; the desire for contact with Ultimate Reality conceived as spiritual, which is prominent in Hinduism; the belief in a moral order of the universe and consequent insistence on moral conduct, which are inculcated by Confucianism; the disinterested pursuit of truth and of human welfare which are often found in those who stand for secular civilization but do not accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour.[8]

This is the expression of the most widely representative Christian gathering in recent years, possibly in Christian history. It is far in advance of many Christian believers. Yet it does not surrender the unique-

[8] Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, pp. 410, 411.

ness of Christ and his place in religion. It indicates sympathetic understanding of other faiths.[9]

The issue frequently arises regarding coöperation of these various faiths for ends that may be common to humanity. During the summer of 1928 a large committee met at Geneva representing Hindus, Buddhists, Confucianists, Jews, Mohammedans, Jains, Shintoists, Brahmans, Zoroastrians, together with Christians, to plan for a world conference of religions on the subject of world peace, each religious group to lay its own program before the others and all to see if larger contribution can be made to this common end. How does this strike you? Distinguish it from a purely religious conference whose purpose might be to determine which is the best religion. Does this issue arise here? Does this idea seem to you to compromise your own religion?

Estimating Other Religions. The first effect of the study of "comparative religion" is naturally to bring to light overlooked virtues and values of other faiths. Many earnest Christians object to this study and to conferences where Christianity is included with other religions. It seems to minimize Christianity, placing it on a level with other faiths and so degrading it. Adherents of other faiths often have the same feeling. Why should their religion enter into council with a new religion like Christianity, surrendering its historic superiority?

Deeper study of comparative religion brings us to safer footing. At first we tend to compare the best theories of other faiths with the worst practices of

[9] Cleland B. McAfee, "Changing Foreign Missions" (Revell, 1927), pp. 222-233.

Christian adherents. We compare their books and our lives. Later, we run fairer parallels, comparing theory with theory, philosophy with philosophy, best with best, worst with worst, totals with totals. Christianity never suffers at this stage. When its principles of life are laid down beside non-Christian principles, when its prevailing religious practices are laid down beside prevailing non-Christian practices, when its total human result is compared with the total human result of non-Christian faiths, it has powerful argument.

It is not to be wondered at that the comparative study of religion should create in the popular mind a belief that the inner essence of all religions is identical while they differ in their vehicles of expression. But this resultant belief in the popular mind is certainly false. The fact is that religions differ comparatively little in their vehicles or media of expression; they differ deeply and widely in their essence. For the essence of a religion is the character of the God to whom worship is offered.[10]

But the argument is never helped by any claim of personal superiority over other men. Recall Paul's argument with Christians: "For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? but if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" I Cor. 4:7.

Defenders of Christianity even in Christian lands are impressed with the woeful ignorance which most of its opponents reveal in their discussions. What must be the feeling of adherents of other religions when they observe the lack of understanding of their

[10] Archbishop Temple, in Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, p. 368.

faiths among Christians! For they take their faiths with utmost seriousness, of course. Writing of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity, Professor Kenneth Saunders says:

To-day each of these faiths offers itself as able to serve men and save them from race prejudice—from destruction, in short. Buddhist journals are full of such claims to universality. *Buddhist India,* a young and scholarly journal, says: "Buddhism is the central force that can bring about a spiritual and cultural unity of the Asiatic nations. It has all the attributes of a world religion." *The Young East* of Tokyo says: "Unless the thought of Mahayana Buddhism dominates the national spirit of the American people, the racial problem of America will never be solved." The missionaries of Hinduism and of Buddhism are at work among Western peoples, confident that they have the key to these difficult problems.[11]

Thoughtful people cannot dismiss such claims carelessly.

Estimating other faiths is made difficult by two considerations: (1) Most religions are without an authoritative literature on which a student can depend. Of course this is true of crude faiths, like those of illiterate races in Africa and Oceanica, without any literature. But it is true also of more organized religions. Their "sacred" literature is either too voluminous to be practicable, as with Buddhism, or too obscure to be helpful or revealing, as with Hinduism. The "Classics" of Confucianism are devoted largely to ethical practices rather than to distinctive religious phases. In a few cases, as with the

[11] Kenneth J. Saunders, "The Gospel for Asia" (Macmillan, 1928), p. x.

Sadhs of India, the sacred book is concealed from nonadherents or, as with the Sikhs, is reserved for ceremonial uses. The Koran, sacred to Moslems, is authoritative for them only in Arabic and is therefore unavailable for Western people. The same restriction is sometimes claimed for Hindu books—that they can be understood only in Sanskrit. But, in any case, without a representative book it is difficult to gain an assured knowledge of a religion. We are warned to take care in our estimate of Buddhism:

> It is seldom possible to say anything of Buddhism of which the opposite cannot be affirmed and proved. Many brilliant generalizations are only half truths when they are pressed.[12]

Professor Reischauer, of Japan, is equally earnest in urging us not to estimate present Buddhism by any early books. There is no book on which one can depend, saying, "This is what the religion essentially is if it is true to itself," as one can do with the Bible for Christianity. This makes it difficult to state these religions fairly or fully.

(2) A second serious difficulty in estimating other faiths is that many of them have beliefs which they do not expect their adherents to practice. There is a widespread theory that some men are called to a holiness which common men need not try to attain or that some men attain a level of religious perfection which is beyond common men. "Holy men" in most lands do not challenge ordinary men to emulate their holiness; it is known to be out of the question. They furnish good to other men by being

[12] Quoted by Kenneth J. Saunders, in "The Gospel for Asia" (Macmillan, 1928), p. 16.

themselves "holy." When we ask, "What does this religion offer or require?" one may point to those who have attained its highest reaches, which does not indicate its working value. The distinction between "holy" men and common men appears in Roman Catholicism and its "works of supererogation," works that go "beyond what is asked" of ordinary men, whereby a store of merit is developed for the help of others. A Roman Catholic writer in India recently said that "Christian counsels of perfection are not obligatory on all Christians, but only on the chosen disciples."[13] But this is not satisfactory to most Christians. Protestants do not believe that Christianity is fairly represented in this theory, which is accepted by many faiths. It involves levels of requirement. Practices that are evil on one level are accepted on a lower level without protest. Doubtless there are Roman Catholic priests who do not believe that miracles really occur at shrines, who yet believe that it is well for the common people to accept them. This would be similar to much non-Christian practice on various levels of intelligence.[14] At Benares in India on one stretch of the river is an impressive university, operating largely on Western lines but distinctively Hindu both in name and religion, with scientific laboratories and modern equipment and courses in all departments, while on another stretch of the river are burning ghats and instances of holy

[13] Quoted in Christian Century, July 12, 1928, p. 882.

[14] An interesting illustration of this can be observed by reading in Katharine Mayo's "Mother India" (Dutton, 1928), the accounts of actual child marriage among the Indian people, and then reading the poet Tagore's theory of child marriage in Count Hermann A. Keyserling's "The Book of Marriage" (Harcourt, 1926). By which should Hinduism be judged?

men and ceremonial practices which seem ages away from the university. All is in the name of Hinduism, all is defended and sustained by advocates of Hinduism, all is within the circle of Hinduism. Yet there is so much that is contradictory in the two that one asks: Which is Hinduism? When the two meet, which must give way?

Anything like a thorough knowledge of other religions is impossible for most of us. It is not necessary. All that can be asked is an intelligent and sympathetic attitude of mind, a frank recognition that sincere men do find values in their religions, so that they are not all superstition and error, and that the values of other religions are to be as readily recognized as their errors. Nor does this involve anything like a surrender of the uniqueness of the Christian faith. Its differences from other religions are more arresting as one goes on in the study.

Some Common Fields of Religions. The religions of the world have certain important things in common. Even here they differ widely in details, sometimes so widely that their main purposes seem different, but this is only a seeming, for each of them seeks to serve the purpose of all religion—bringing men into some sense of the unseen realities and binding them to duty more fully on that account.

1. All deal with the place of man in the world. They relate him in some way to the rest of nature. Most have some theory of his origin, but it is generally separable from any distinctive religious teaching.

2. All discuss his relation to a continued existence beyond death. Ideas of immortality vary greatly;

some make it personal; in some it means absorption into other forms of existence.

3. All imply some unseen Power or Person with which (or whom) man is in some way connected, on which (or whom) he is dependent for some valuable results, to which (or whom) he is in some way responsible. Several great faiths have begun without this assertion but their adherents have swung into it, and while many individuals refuse to assert the reality of such Power or Person, no system of religion has long continued without doing so.[15]

4. All provide some way or ways of expressing this relation and of gaining the help of this Power or Person—something in the nature of worship, prayer, priesthood (ministry), religious authority.

5. All recognize a disorder in the nature or character or conduct of men, ranging from mere misfortune to moral responsibility (or culpability). "Sin," in some form and under some term, is a universal idea but it is by no means uniform.

6. All propose some way of clearing this disorder, something that may be called "salvation." This is chiefly by effort on man's part or chiefly by something done by God. Professor Royce said that the ultimate purpose of every religion is to answer the question: "What must I do to be saved?" Differences will develop according to the idea of what sin is and from what man needs to be saved.

[15] Dr. Frank Rawlinson, "Some Chinese Ideas of the Supreme Being" (The Mission Press, Shanghai, 1927), shows that not even the supposed Confucian exception is real, and Dr. John Baillie, "Interpretation of Religion" (Scribners, 1929), pp. 386ff, argues that Buddhism was not atheistic as soon as it ceased to be merely a philosophy of life within Brahmanism and became a real religion.

We are not discussing here the philosophical ideas of religion, worked out in protected studies or in university lecture rooms, but the organized, working forms of religion by which men live. The great religions of the world, with which Christianity is increasingly associated, deal with the practical, everyday demands of the religious life. The Christian religion lays no claim to being the only one which faces these grave issues. It does offer itself as the best solution of the problems, the final answer to the questions. Nor need one know other faiths in order to determine whether he should be satisfied as a Christian. When a man finds his religious questions answered so fully that he has peace with God and man and an assured guide to right conduct, he need not be disturbed by the thought of other possible ways of dealing with the same questions. It is when his religion leaves him dissatisfied and disturbed, confused about duty and the future, that he seeks farther. His first duty, whatever his religion, is to examine it more carefully, to see if perhaps he has failed to enter into its real meaning. Perhaps it is he and not his religion that is at fault. But if he finds that his own religion will not, at its best, bring him what his soul needs, then he may well examine another to see if the points of view it requires, the power it offers, the inspiration it affords, will not meet his needs. This is the basis on which any missionary religion is offered to men. It does not imply that existing religions are bad and depraving, but only that they do not provide the values which the proposed religion will bring to sincere and intelligent adherents.

The Divergence of Christianity from Other Faiths. The Christian religion has much that is peculiar to itself, and no discussion of its relation to other faiths should obscure in our minds these distinctive elements. Indeed, the strength and appeal of the Christian faith lies in its difference from other faiths. If it is just like them, why should their adherents turn to it, or be asked to do so? Unless it gives something which they do not give, or gives fully what they only suggest, it seems hardly worth while for other faiths to be replaced by it.

The essential question is to discover what Christianity has to give to the world which no other religion can give—in any degree. The difference has to be one of kind. Unless Christianity is essentially and radically different from other religions, unless there is some sense in which it is just right and they are just wrong, then there isn't much to be said for the missionary drive. . . . I have the conviction that the points which the various world religions have in common with Christianity are in large measure the points which are not specifically Christian, but merely religious.[16]

Professor Mackintosh[17] thinks that Paul's speech at Athens, Acts 17:22-31, failed to move the city because it did not present the distinctively Christian ideas but was devoted to showing how it really fitted in with what his hearers were already thinking. It is never helpful when an adherent of another faith says, "Well, after all, your religion and ours are the same thing, only differently expressed." It is of

[16] Quoted from John Macmurray in Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, pp. 364f.

[17] Hugh R. Mackintosh, "Originality of the Christian Message" (Scribners, 1920), p. 24.

a piece with the idea of an "eclectic religion," which is always so fascinating to some minds. Why not take the good points out of all the religions and make another? It is something like making a perfect human body by taking admirable features from many bodies —a hand here, a foot there, a nose yonder, and so on. It completely overlooks the fact that in a sound religion, as in a sound human body, there is a unity of life which is destroyed as soon as parts are isolated.

A case may well be made out for the assimilation of good in other systems, but the lesson I learn from Hinduism (which has practiced this assimilation) is that it would be better for Christianity to shun all influence of other systems than exercise a weak or sentimental or undiscriminating hospitality to other faiths, however genuinely held. . . . There is nothing in the history of religion that would encourage an informed Christian to advocate the conscious mingling of creeds so that there results an amalgam composed of elements abstracted from various religions.[18]

A religion is a unity so definite that it is not "intolerant" for an adherent to count his faith the best. It is poor logic to say, "Your religion is doubtless best for you, while mine is best for me." It is like saying to a nation, "You have your system of chemistry and it is doubtless true and best for you, while our chemical theory is true and best for us, though the two differ radically." Since we live in one world, we can have but one correct chemical theory, no matter how variously it may be applied in various lands. Since we are one race, living in one moral order, under one fatherly God, we can have but one

[18] Daniel J. Fleming, "Attitudes Toward Other Faiths" (Association Press, 1928), pp. 146f.

ultimate religion for all men, expressed in its various ways but conveying to men the same truth about God and human duty.[19] This true and final faith will have some points in common with other forms of religion, because none of them is wholly false. Yet it will differ from them because none of them covers the whole truth. A recent writer has expressed it well:

To the philosopher or to the historian perhaps the most remarkable feature about Christianity is its central position as a kind of synthesis of all the higher religions. Intellectually, its theistic conception of God comprehends the deism of the Mohammedan and the pantheism of the Hindu; emotionally, it fuses the disciplined restraint of Confucius with the fervor of Indian *bhakti;* ethically, it stands as the climax which unifies developments and tendencies which elsewhere only partially achieve maturity. Add to this the fact that it is the one religion which has really "faced up to" the problem of evil, and we see that every philosopher must start off with a consideration of Christianity as being, as it were, the "type form" of religion. If a committee of students of comparative religion had set to work to compile a system, carefully selecting the best elements in each of the great religions, they might have reached something very like Christianity. But that was not the way it came. It was flashed on the world as a Vision; and its synthetic unity is not like that of a well-drawn committee report, but that of a work of art.[20]

Seven Distinctive Elements in Christianity. 1. *The Christian idea of God* is peculiar to it. His personal, moral character of unsullied holiness does

[19] Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), pp. 5-8.

[20] Canon Burnett H. Streeter, "Reality" (Macmillan, 1926), p. 48.

not shut him away from man but assures humanity of his understanding and sympathy in every struggle for good, while his love leads him to seek the salvation of man from sin and evil. The Christian word "Father" means far more than originator; it means an entire attitude and relationship. God is the Creator of the world order but he is far more; he is its Supporter and Guide toward a destiny worthy of himself. The idea expressed in the doctrine of the Trinity is not the beginning, but the consummation, of Christian thinking about God, and it stands as the explanation and ground of Christian experience.[21] Prayer to such a God is no mere human exercise; it is an effective entrance into the order of events. The world is very different with a loving God as its Maker and Sustainer.

Nothing is more certain than this, that in his teaching about faith in God and in his practice of it, Jesus was absolutely unique among all the teachers of religion that history has known. The science of religion has established this once for all. We know more or less exactly what all the acknowledged greatest have taught—the Chinese sages, Gautama, Socrates, Mohammed. In the midst of them stands this figure with his unique and immovable confidence in the Father, his faith that God is always nearer, mightier, more loving, and more free to help every one of us than any one of us has ever realized, and that therefore our supreme duty is faith in him and the staking of everything we have upon him and his purpose of good for mankind. Christianity is this or it is nothing at all. Everything turned then and everything turns still on whether on this central matter Jesus was a dreamer or the only human being broad awake

[21] Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), pp. 96-99.

to the eternal, in such fashion that if we would come into touch with ultimate Reality we, too, have to follow him. No other option, indeed, in such a case is open to us, for not only has none of the great leaders of the past said such things of God, but no one is saying them to-day except such as, whether they know it or not, are his disciples. This is still his solitary and peculiar teaching about God, the very core and essence of his revelation.[22]

2. *The Christian idea of man* distinguishes it. No faith so stresses man's inherent worth. It adopts the Jewish expression that man is made "in the image of God." It holds this of all men; the human race is therefore one. Man is also made "of the dust of the ground" and is therefore like the rest of creation; yet he is no mere animal. Christian concern about human sin arises from its strong conviction regarding human worth. One does not grieve over the breaking of a cheap vase from one's mantel. But if the vase is priceless, its breaking is important. If man is what Christianity declares he is, then his ruin by sin is deeply serious. When he is seen as a child of God, with potential eternal relations to him, no cost can be too heavy for his rescue from whatever hinders his high destiny.

3. *The Christian way of salvation* is peculiar to it. Sin has disturbed human relation to God and to other men, and has unsettled the inner harmony of life for each individual. The Christian faith teaches that God has made that fact his own concern and that the way of salvation is determined by him rather than by man. The cross is the accepted symbol of the

[22] D. S. Cairns, "The Faith That Rebels" (Doubleday, Doran, Second Edition, 1929), pp. 212f.

Christian faith because in it is expressed not only the fundamental duty of men but also the essential attitude of God toward men. It represents the love of God incarnated in Christ. Salvation, in Christian thinking, occurs when a man is brought into right relation with God and continues in remaking his relation to other men. It does not wait until eternity, though it continues there. A Christian believer does not "hope to be saved" at some later time; he finds himself "saved" in the present life by being put in right relations with God and man and by having peace restored within his own nature.[23]

4. *The Christian teaching of human society* is peculiar to it, though at many points it gladly touches that of other faiths. It teaches a universal brotherhood, based on essential human unity. All castes or fixed classes are conflictive with it, though their existence has often disgraced its adherents. It challenges its believers when they deny inherent racial equality, and stands as their severest judge when they assume an attitude of contempt or patronage toward other races or nations. When human equality is secured and all groups of society have adequate rights and opportunities, when oppression ceases and justice reigns, this will be according to the social ideals of the Christian religion.

5. *The Christian teaching of human destiny* is a distinguishing mark. Human personality has such value that its continued existence is morally inevitable. Absorption into an undifferentiated Univer-

[23] Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), Chapter VI, discusses more fully the place of the cross in the Christian system and the Christian idea of salvation.

sal would be a violation of its worth. Its destruction by a Father God is unthinkable. Hilaire Belloc, the British essayist, in a recent article said:

Only Personality will produce personality, something more personal perhaps, but not less. Admitting personality in man, Personality is behind the universe. The process of the universe has a meaning, the end of man becomes rational. But if his end is upon this earth, that end is not rational in the ultimate sense of the word "rational." It does not complete his being. It leaves not only loose ends, but loose ends infinitely larger than the woven strands which build up his earthly life.

In human destiny moral distinctions tend to become permanent and determine the future. The Christian faith describes the future in terms of a city, the highest form of human social organization. It is not to be dreaded but desired. For many men both life and immortality are dull, gray facts, undesirable but unavoidable. Under the touch of Christ they become radiant, II Tim. 1:10. Some religions offer escape from life; Christ offers fullness of life, John 10:10. Some propose that man shall pass out of existence; Christ proposes that man shall ultimately reach fullest personal existence.

6. *Christianity provides power* to secure the realization of its ideals. Christ promised to furnish the disciples both his power and his presence in carrying out his program.

A familiar Chinese legend tells that once upon a time the teachers of the three religions (Confucius, Lao-tse, and Buddha) came down to earth to ascertain why it was that, in spite of all the splendid ethical content of their teachings, China still remained

unregenerate. Reaching the earth they proceeded to interrogate an elderly man who seemed likely to furnish the desired information. So they catechized him on the principles of their respective systems. Greatly, however, to their surprise, the old man, who turned out to be letter-perfect in the Way of Virtue, the Classics, and the Sutras, confessed that all this knowledge was powerless to advance China along the way of goodness. "Sirs," he said, "we are stone from the waist downwards; we can think and know, but we cannot act." [24]

Christ promised power for the life to which he called. Professor Royce felt that the neglected doctrine of the Christian faith is that of the Holy Spirit as an abiding reality, binding all believers into a "beloved community." [25] His meaning is not that of all Christians, but his contention is valid. The Christian belief is that God is concerned with the progress of the Kingdom in the world, that he is present and inspiring, not remote and indifferent. The Christian ideal is therefore practicable. Anyone can theorize on an ideal life, but most men experience the despair of knowing much better than they are able to do, Rom. 7:15-20. Anybody could tell the paralytic that he should take up his bed and walk, but it was Jesus who told him in such terms that he did it, Matt. 9:6, 7. Whether the power was aroused in the man or imparted to him, it was Jesus who could speak so that the result was accomplished. Can the program of the Christian life and the social program of the Kingdom of God be

[24] Herbert H. Gowen, "The Universal Faith" (Morehouse, 1926), p. 109.

[25] Josiah Royce, "The Problem of Christianity" (Macmillan, 1913), Lecture IX.

carried through? The Christian faith offers power for a favorable answer.

By contrast here, Professor Kaneka Umaji, of Waseda University, Japan, says:

> To me Buddhism, with its profound philosophy and its spiritual power over men and women, is the best of all religions. Yet with sorrow I confess that it fails to serve the youth of to-day. It is a sun obscured in clouds. It has been left behind by a progressive world. Not a few young men, having sought in vain, have desperately flung their lives away in a deep cataract pool or before a running train. Buddhism must therefore be reformed.[26]

Christianity does not need to be reformed to protect men against this sense of impotence; it needs only to be understood.

7. *All these distinctive things are centered in Christ,* and he is himself the unique element in Christianity. The tendency to classify him and standardize his teaching is inevitable. There have been other religious leaders and founders; there have been other good men, living and dying for their faith; there have been other moralists. Why not explain him as we explain all the others? Because we cannot. He does not fit into any group at the very points that mark him most definitely. He brings a Life which no one else brings. He remains a living Presence as the other founders do not. His death means to millions of men what no other death means. He makes God mean to these men what no one else makes him mean. He sets his mark on human life as no one else does. The others have been; he is. The others lived; he

[26] Quoted by Arthur J. Brown in "Japan in the World of To-Day" (Revell, 1928), p. 257.

lives. The others were examples; he is a living Presence and Power. Richard Hooker (1553-1600) expressed it in what is now quaint English:

> The only object which separateth ours from other religions is Jesus Christ, in whom none but the Church doth believe and whom none but the Church doth worship. We find the apostles do everywhere distinguish thereby the Church from infidels and Jews, accounting them which call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to be his Church.

In our own day we distinguish our religion from all others by the same name.

When Irenæus, the Church father, was asked by followers of Marcion: "What new thing did Jesus bring?" he answered, "He brought all that was new in bringing himself." And when a Hindu professor of philosophy asked the Christian Sadhu of our day, "What have you found in Christianity which you did not find in the religions of India?" the reply was, "I have found Jesus Christ." [27]

Dogmatism does not help us here. The conviction of the Christian faith cannot be transmitted by authority. It must be communicated by life. When Nathanael asked a natural question—whether the Messiah could come out of a town like Nazareth, nowhere mentioned in the prophecies—Philip did not argue. He said, "Come and see," John 1:45, 46. Assurance comes from trying the offer in personal life. Of course it cannot be an unchecked method. Personal experience may be misguided; it may be explained in illogical and foolish ways. Still it remains true that the ultimate assurance of any great religious truth is

[27] John Mackay, in Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, p. 383.

that it touches and enriches personal life, robbing it nowhere. The Jerusalem Conference Message expresses it vividly:

> We believe that men were made for Christ and cannot really live apart from him. Our fathers were impressed with the horror that men should die without Christ—we share that horror; we are impressed also with the horror that men should live without Christ. Herein lies the Christian motive; it is simple. We cannot live without Christ and we cannot bear to think of men living without him. We cannot be content to live in a world that is un-Christ-like. We cannot be idle while the yearning of his heart for his brethren is unsatisfied. (Report, Vol. I, p. 406.)

Each man has the right to test the Christian religion in actual experience. All religions start with human needs. What they do with those needs, how fully they supply them, is the measure of their value as religions. If the Christian religion can satisfy human needs more fully and more worthily than any other, it will be in so far the world religion.

Not to be neutral, but to be impartial, is the ideal. For believing that the needs of mankind can best be met in the thought and faith that center in Jesus Christ the author makes no more apology than does a chemist when he is convinced on evidence that oxygen is a more active agent than nitrogen gas; or than a physicist who concludes that rock crystal transmits more of the sun's heat than does the ordinary glass. Both men and societies need to know the highest source for motive powers; both need to know the medium between them and God which is most truly transparent.[28]

[28] Daniel J. Fleming, "Attitudes Toward Other Faiths" (Association Press, 1928), p. xx.

FURTHER SUGGESTED READING

E. Stanley Jones, "The Christ of the Indian Road" (Abingdon Press, 1925), Chapters II, X.

Daniel J. Fleming, "Attitudes Toward Other Faiths" (Association Press, 1928), especially the Introduction and Chapter VIII.

Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, Chapters I-VI, which discuss the relation of Christianity to each of the great world religions.

William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapter VI.

Cleland B. McAfee, "Changing Foreign Missions" (Revell, 1927), Chapter I and pp. 36-38.

Samuel McCrea Cavert, "The Adventure of the Church" (Missionary Education Movement, New York, 1927), especially pp. 220-228.

Suggestions for Study VIII

This study discusses the effort to make the Christian religion known in all lands. No nation is fully "Christian," but some lands know Christianity better than others do. Does this distinction seem to you valid? Does it mean that the lands which know it least are to be most condemned?

1. Give the argument for this effort based on (*a*) the fact that all Christians to-day and all "Christian" lands are the product of the effort in the past, and (*b*) that it helps to make a world brotherhood. How would you answer the newspaper suggestion that the effort to present the Christian faith has sometimes produced national discord instead of brotherhood?

2. The three stages of the adventure of the Christian religion: missionary, transition, indigenous. At which stage is it now?

3. The essential purpose of the effort—how is it to be worded so that it seems to you most worth while? What is the relation of the last commission of Christ to the rest of his teaching? Analyze it into its three parts. Which of these parts seems to you to present the largest difficulties? What relation should the members of the new Christian group bear to the social customs of their former lives? How much change ought the Christian faith to require of its adherents in non-"Christian" lands?

Notebook: Inquire among at least ten of your friends regarding their belief or doubt in the matter of the program of the Christian faith for world-wide consideration and put in your notebook their positions and arguments, with some notation of the way in which they might be answered if at all. Be sure in your own thinking to realize that no question is now to be raised about starting such a program. It is already the largest program in the human mind now in process; the only question is regarding one's attitude toward it. It goes forward either in spite of or because of every Christian believer.

STUDY VIII

THE MOVEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION TOWARD THE WHOLE WORLD

It was noted in Study V that the propriety of calling any nation "Christian" can be debated. But some nations know the Christian faith better than others know it, however defective may be their actual observance of it. The lands that know it best doubtless should be most severely judged by it. So Jesus said, Matt. 11:20-24, and this is the practice of the world, for it constantly measures Christian lands by Christian standards. No serious discussion occurs regarding the value of Christian principles; the discussion is always regarding the loyalty of supposed Christian nations to those principles. An African native paper warned its readers that the Christianity which the whites wish to impose on the Africans is not in fact Christianity at all:

> Let the blacks put no faith in the affirmations, for their life is not in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Scripture, where we are told forcibly that for those who follow Jesus Christ there is no longer any distinction of race—no color bar.[1]

The complaint in China is not that the Western nations have been too Christian in their relation to

[1] Quoted by Edwin W. Smith in "The Golden Stool" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 247.

the East; it is that they have not been so Christian as they ought to have been. No other religion is used as a standard; no other figure is used but that of Christ when comparisons are made.

When the Christian religion moves outward toward the whole world it has to reckon with the lands in which it is already well known. The evils that prevail in these lands may be overaccented but they preclude any spirit of personal superiority or arrogance in going to other lands with the Christian religion. Such a spirit is incompatible with the gospel of Christ under any conditions.

Christianity is not the "native" religion of any of the present "Christian" lands. It was brought to them either by messengers from other lands or by immigrants from earlier homes. There is no point in the suggestion that Christian believers are somehow impertinent when they present the faith to those who already have a religion. The faith has spread in this way from the first. It is a traveling faith and is always moving when it is most vital. Why should it stop with its present adherents, since it did not stop before it reached them? If an existing religion were reason for refusal to carry Christianity farther, it would not have started at all, for everyone in the world had a religion when Christ was born. Similarly, everybody now has some scientific theory—ideas of the origin of the world, ideas of the constitution of matter, ideas of the use of natural forces. Yet it is neither arrogant nor impertinent to introduce into any land or group a better scientific theory. Life is thus enriched and humanity is bound together in a new brotherhood of mutual helpfulness.

This spreading of our best possession is one of the most effective aids to world understanding and fraternity.

No greater contribution can be made to the promotion of racial understanding and good will than the making known of the Christian gospel, which by revealing the character and purpose of God gives to all endeavors to establish right relations among men an unassailable foundation in the eternal order; which in the cross shows us love and sacrifice in the life of God himself; which redeems us from the world and raises us above it, and at the same time sends us back into it to live and work and serve in the power of an endless life; and which, in teaching us that all that we are and have is God's gift, cuts away every ground of superiority and pride and makes possible a real brotherhood on the basis of our common relation to God.[2]

Lack of interracial and international understanding is a constant menace to world brotherhood. While brief contact with other races tends to accent their peculiarities, longer fellowship brings out fundamental likenesses. Abel Bonnard, a French traveler, writes that he found the Chinese callous and unattractive, but that M. de Guebriant, an experienced missionary, corrected him earnestly: "Believe me, everything capable of winning love is in them."

The missionaries are distinguished from all other foreign residents in China by the fact that they have a good deal of commendation of the Chinese to advance to you. It is instinctive caution in the first place, no doubt, that made them talk like this, but having taken far more trouble to know the Chinese

[2] Joseph H. Oldham, "Christianity and the Race Problem" (Association Press, 1924), p. 246.

and to dwell on their good points than any other foreigners, it is also highly probable that they have discovered good in them which remains hidden from other Europeans. [He asked adverse questions quite in vain.] "They are such good-hearted, honest fellows," the fathers [Roman Catholic missionaries] kept repeating. They even praised their courage to me. When trouble breaks out and the Chinese are pressed to their faith, they will nearly all die for it with the utmost fortitude.[3]

This is true in all lands. The warmest advocates of any race or nation are apt to be missionaries. Travelers, tourists, hasty observers, are the despair of thoughtful world students. They are so assertive, so sure, so ready with generalizations, and so deeply ignorant and uninformed.[4] No other foreign residents have such occasion as missionaries to live near to the whole life of the people and to know their language intimately and accurately. None are so able to give a fair estimate of their capacities and purposes. Professor Daniel J. Fleming's book on missions in India was called "Building with India";[5] he believes that the people of India are joining in building the Christian Church. Miss Jean K. Mackenzie's book is called "Friends of Africa";[6] she counts Africans as truly her friends as any others. These are fairly typical titles. Very often the missionary enterprise is called "an adventure in friendship"—a good name for it.

[3] Abel Bonnard, "In China, 1920-1921" (Dutton, 1927), p. 133.

[4] Charles A. Selden, "Are Missions a Failure?" (Revell, 1927), Chapter I.

[5] Missionary Education Movement, 1922.

[6] Leavis, 1928.

For the sake of world brotherhood some unifying spirit must be found.[7] Nations cannot come into intimate relation with one another without a certain amount of rivalry.

We who call ourselves by the name of Christ know that in him there is neither East nor West, and that in his cross is the only motive power strong enough to overcome the tremendous obstacles to unity. Men of the other faiths realize that he is a power unto salvation, and they are coming to see in him *the* way of life. . . . Sooner or later, Christ and Krishna, Krishna and Sakyamuni, become rivals, and the Christian ideal of sainthood challenges that of Hindu and Buddhist. . . . As a Hindu leader said lately, "The only two figures of supreme moral power are Buddha and Christ."[8]

The international mind must be built up by patient, continuous effort. Nowhere is it so natural as to those who face the world with a sense of obligation which is born of their own relation to the Saviour of the world. No others can interpret more fairly the problems of other nations or lead the stronger nations and races to think fraternally of the weaker. Nothing takes the place of the early missionary motives—the wish and purpose of Christ, the need of men, the nature of the Christian gospel—but our own day sees a new motive added to them: the need of the world for a brotherhood and fellowship which can be built most securely around the figure of Christ.

The Christian Religion on Its Mission. Dr. Samuel M. Cavert calls his book on missions "The

[7] Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), Chapter VIII.

[8] Kenneth J. Saunders, "The Gospel for Asia" (Macmillan, 1928), p. xii.

Adventure of the Church."[9] There have been only brief periods when at least some believers have not been concerned for missionary work. The whole-hearted loyalty of all professed believers has never been given to it. A fraction of the Church is responsible for the present amazing achievement. Missionary advocates have had to carry not only the enterprise abroad but indifferent and hostile elements at home. What percentage of your own church is probably committed to world missions?

The modern missionary enterprise dates from the eighteenth century, when there was an awakening to world interest in many lines.[10] It met stiff opposition, and no really new adverse argument has emerged in our own day except possibly the note of admiration for other nations and their cultures which is urged against the introduction of anything so crude and unsuitable as the Christian faith. Otherwise, opposition to missions stands about where it did at the first. Argument in its behalf, meanwhile, has increased greatly. Its scope has broadened until the variety of its methods is now almost bewildering. One by one new phases have developed: medical, educational, industrial, philanthropic, literary. Only a careful student can keep abreast of the movement which spreads knowledge of Christ around the world. The average opponent of the enterprise seldom has any idea of what it really is. The Christian movement, of which the missionary movement is one phase, has become the most widespread single conscious

[9] Missionary Education Movement, 1927.

[10] Edward C. Moore, "West and East" (Scribners, 1920), discusses missions as a detail in a world movement.

movement of the human race.[11] Only very limited areas of the world are untouched, though vast reaches of it are most inadequately approached.

The Stages of the Adventure. There are three stages in the movement of the Christian religion for the service of any land:

1. *A missionary phase,* when the burden is borne by representatives from other lands. Sometimes this is inaugurated at the wish of the people of the land; more frequently it originates in the zeal of Christians elsewhere. Once it is inaugurated, the desire of adjacent people tends to widen it. Messengers from outlying regions call for teachers, doctors, evangelists, to extend their influence.[12] In this phase of the enterprise, the foreign representatives control the movement, determining locations, methods, conditions of adherence, forms of worship and belief and organization, and they have often paid the penalty of their lives for the offense of being foreign and of starting something new. Officials are often hostile, even when individuals gladly coöperate in the enterprise. Hence it is never fair to say that "the people do not want the missionaries" unless one qualifies the statement in the interests of people who do want them. If dislike on the part of some is to prevent the service of others, then the churches in America and England ought to close, since in any considerable community there are those who do not care for them and would willingly see them disappear. The number of people who welcome missionaries and their message increases

[11] Cleland B. McAfee, "Changing Foreign Missions" (Revell, 1927), Chapter I.

[12] As described in Jean K. Mackenzie's "Friends of Africa" (Leavis, 1928), pp. 138ff.

in every land during this first stage of pioneering and paternal leadership.

2. *A transition phase,* when local believers gradually take leadership in the new Christian movement. This phase has many stages. The passage from purely missionary leadership is generally gradual and often difficult. The local believers seem to experienced missionaries mere children in the faith, not yet trained or experienced. Many converts hesitate to assume responsibility and the paternal spirit carries over among missionaries. Financial difficulties complicate the case. The new Church is almost always formed among the poorer classes, as Jesus once said, Matt. 11:5, and as was true at the very beginning, I Cor. 1:26-29. By the time there are national Church leaders to undertake the work, institutions and programs are often laid out in such a large way that foreign money seems necessary, and with foreign money is apt to go foreign influence or control.

For such reasons, the transition phase is apt to be long drawn out. It passes from the bare beginnings of local coöperation through a period of fraternal relations where local leaders share responsibility with foreigners and at last undertake major responsibility. Students of missions watch this phase with eager interest. The plan from the first has been to secure a local leadership to which foreign aid could be given without foreign domination. Nothing in missionary theory makes this even difficult, much less impossible or undesirable. It is only practical experience and historical attitudes that complicate it.

3. *An indigenous phase,* when the faith is presented and propagated by nationals, with such fellowship as

they may desire from other lands. Missionary forces have sought to organize Churches that shall be "self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating." Intelligent people have never supposed that a land can be "evangelized" by workers from abroad. Such workers merely start the movement. Once it is under way believers within the land itself must determine its progress, with any coöperation they may need or desire from outside their own number. The Jerusalem Conference suggested that this is a reciprocal arrangement, each land helping all the others:

> The Churches of the West send missions and missions of help to the Churches of Africa and Asia. We believe that the time is come when all would gain if the younger Churches were invited to send missions of help to the Churches of Europe and America, that they may minister of their treasure to the spiritual life of those to whom they come. (Report, Vol. I, p. 410.)

Anyone who knows even slightly the Christian Churches of "mission lands" knows believers there who are quite as able to help us of the West as our missionaries are to help them. Their number is yet small and they are faced with a gigantic task for which they need our aid, but they are ready now to pour blessing back into the spiritual treasury of the West.

The Present Situation. The three phases of the Christian movement in lands where Christ is least known do not succeed each other in regular procession like the years in a high school. Their progress varies greatly. All the phases, in all their stages, can be found in any of the larger lands where mission work

is done. In some places the purely missionary phase is the only logical phase for present conditions. In others the third phase is already here; missionaries remain as helpers only. The world cannot be standardized by either extreme. Because there are highly trained and capable leaders to be found in some sections of a great land, ready to displace foreign leadership, it is sometimes carelessly assumed that such leaders are to be found everywhere. But the development is uneven; it presents a ragged front where all the phases can be found. The work must be carried on in the phase which actually exists, but always facing toward complete national responsibility and leadership.

Breaking away from foreign aid too quickly endangers the whole enterprise. Part of its value lies in its unifying influence. It is precisely because men of all races can work side by side in it that the Christian movement contributes so richly to the world's need just now.

In all this busyness of the redding up of Africa, in which science, missions, government, and philanthropy have their part, in all this education of Africa which is becoming more and more a coöperative effort, with mission schools and government schools and Jeanes fund schools and a long and strong pull together—with all this concern for the whole man which is the zeal of the modern effort for Africa—there is one thing that is expected of the Christian mission as sole and only agent. That is the Christian appeal to the deeply religious African. If we cannot do that work well and with expedition, we must know ourselves the least profitable of servants.[13]

[13] Jean K. Mackenzie, "Friends of Africa" (Leavis, 1928), p. 210.

This is a joint work, demanded of Christian believers of all races and lands. They cannot abandon it until it is accomplished.

The Essential Purpose of the Effort. The Christian religion derives its world mission from its Founder and the central purpose of the mission is to make Jesus Christ known effectively to all men. If he had never expressed any wish or left any instruction about doing so, the duty would have been just as definite and the impulse just as inescapable. All his teaching, as well as his personal character, involves universal application. No one understands Christ or his essential message without seeing that it is good for all men if it is good for any men. "It deserves to be carried across the sea if it deserves to be carried across the street." The missionary obligation is not, therefore, dependent on any single expression of Jesus or about him. Yet it is clearly expressed in Matt. 28:19, 20: "Go ye therefore, and [1] make disciples of all the nations, [2] baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: [3] teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you." This indicates that the essential purpose of world contact is:

1. *To make disciples of the Christian truth.*
2. *To establish a brotherhood of these disciples.*
3. *To aid in developing this brotherhood in the program of Christ.*

The succession seems logical, though of course the elements are often simultaneous.

1. The initial step is naturally the winning of adherents to the faith. These adherents have always had earlier religious connections, as in the case of

Jesus' disciples. When men followed him, it necessarily drew them away from any other following that may have been their habit. This fact emerged early in the movement, John 12:19; Luke 5:33; Acts 21:21. The break of the early believers with their previous connections caused some controversy, as Paul's letters show, but he and his colleagues had to insist upon it at certain points.

Here emerges one of the grave problems of Christian expansion. To what extent shall new believers be expected to abandon their earlier ideas and customs in order to be true Christians? Any universal statement would be challenged by Christian history. Christianity has often absorbed at least forms of expression from its environment, transforming them when it does so.[14] It released itself very easily from the limitations of geography, language, and race which sometimes bind religions, and in entering into other cultures was inevitably affected by them. Creeds have been noticeably influenced by the social conditions under which they have been framed. Architecture, forms of worship, harmonized music, agencies for benevolence, have come to the Christian Church from surrounding conditions. This is altogether to its credit. It shows that the faith has lived in its own times, receiving as well as giving, still preserving its essential meaning.

The extent of this process of "borrowing" by the Christian Church can easily be exaggerated—it has been exaggerated. But it is there. Its justification

[14] George H. Gilbert, "Greek Thought in the New Testament" (Macmillan, 1928), seems to many scholars to exaggerate this fact in early history, but the material is suggestive.

depends upon the recognition that it is not only in Israel and in Jesus that the divine wisdom or word has been spoken.[15]

We are reminded of Quintilian's word about Phidias' Olympian Zeus, that "its beauty seemed to add something to revealed religion." It added illustration and enrichment at least. In the same way, these additions in Christian history added to its value in the day when they were vital. Naturally they involved the risk of altering its transforming power, modifying it where it should have modified them.

Believers do not realize how much of their religious practice is incidental and not essential to the Christian faith, until they see worshipers in other lands following the same practice. When Western architecture, hymns, forms of worship, are taken bodily into Eastern surroundings, they make Christianity itself seem foreign. New believers are sometimes embarrassed before their friends by the foreignness of Christian practices. Yet the practices of existing religions are too closely associated with abandoned religious ideas to be used without modification. As religious terms have to be used with new meanings until hearers become accustomed to what they now mean rather than to what they formerly meant, so it proves to be with some practices. They do not mean to Christians what they mean to others and it requires time for the new meaning to be grasped.

For example, when Christians bow before the picture of the emperor in Japan, they mean to show respect for him and his government. There are Japa-

[15] Bishop Charles Gore, "Christ and Society" (Scribners, 1928), p. 14.

nese who bow before it in the spirit of worship. It is the same act, but the meaning is different. When a Buddhist believer erects a temple, he hopes to acquire "merit"; when a Christian believer erects a church, he has no such wish, yet like the Buddhist he erects it for his religion. If a Moslem offers his five daily prayers, he is fulfilling a requirement of his faith; when a Christian does the same thing it is not under requirement but in a spirit of dependence and trust. There are Christian *sadhus* in India, going about in poverty like Hindu *sadhus,* but they are not seeking holiness; they are trying to serve others.

Paul warned of the danger involved in this habit of the Christian faith. Its adherents might go too far in continuing old practices, thinking that there was merit in them. That is the ground of his sharp words against Jewish customs, as in Gal. 2:4, while he pleads for Christian liberty. So long as a Christian can "take or leave" the old customs, no harm comes from them. The instant he feels that they are necessary, they have begun to injure him. This is why new Churches so generally require of professed converts some evidence of a clean break with the old faith. They oppose any considerable "carry over" from earlier practices. The household idols are burned, the old associations are broken, the religious customs are renounced. Yet, unavoidably, the surroundings determine the method of the new religion. It should be so. The "new life" must be lived among one's fellows.

Test your own case. How far ought you to be different from others just because you are a Christian and they are not? If one of your friends became a

Christian, what would you expect him to change in his life? The change might be more marked in a non-Christian environment because many of our prevailing customs are really Christian, though practiced by non-Christians.

2. When disciples are won to Christ they are to be formed into a brotherhood, united by their relation to the name of God, into which they are baptized. Age-long discussion gathers around the mode and ultimate value of baptism, but here we think of it as a symbol of brotherhood around the Name. This at least it is. And this involves the duty of finding or encouraging some organization in which the brotherhood may be efficiently expressed. It is inevitable that the early form of this organization in a newly constituted Christian group will be that of the foreign leaders who have introduced the faith. Later, the nationals may choose another form, following any light they receive, and most missionaries are ready for them to do so. Or they may modify the form which the missionaries brought. Of course, in some instances the Church form is counted an essential part of the religion, and missionaries allow as little modification as possible, as in Roman Catholic missions. In Protestant missions modes and forms are rarely identified with the thing done.

The most striking trait of the brotherhood formed by the baptized group is its outward facing. It exists for service; it could not be worthy of the Name if it did not. This is the new note for most non-Christian lands. Few of the great religions provide for anything exactly like the Christian Church—believers banded together for mutual aid and for

service of others. In most cases (it is less true among Moslems) the Christian faith has introduced corporate worship—gathering together for joint religious action, singing hymns, hearing a sermon, making a common gift, joining in unified prayer. Everywhere the brotherhood has to avoid the prevailing practice of seeking "merit" by deeds of kindliness and acts of worship. Its safeguard is the example and inspiration of Christ who sought nothing for himself and "went about doing good," Acts 10:38.

3. After the brotherhood is formed there follows the long training in Christian principles and the practice of the Christian life. "Whatsoever I commanded you" is a large order. There is no point where the Christian religion fails an adherent, nor any line beyond which it cannot help him. It has been noted already that life does not fall into sections, one of which can be labeled "religious," while the others bear other labels.[16] The members of a new Christian group are obligated to find ways of applying their faith to all of life. A prominent Chinese educator said to the writer that the difference between a new Christian believer and one with generations behind him is that the latter has become instinctively aware of the demands of his faith and applies it almost automatically, while the new believer has to think it out anew in each case. This is put extremely, but is it not substantially true?

Meanwhile, the new Christians live in their own land with its special problems and burdens. The visiting missionaries are not always the best judges

[16] Winfred E. Garrison, "Catholicism and the American Mind" (Willett, 1928), discusses this point elaborately.

of the attitude to be taken toward national or racial situations. Certain moral issues are the same the world around, but local problems may be peculiar to a place. Missionaries can guide to the right spirit and the fundamental principles of the Christian faith. They may determine the attitude they themselves can consistently take, but it may not be the attitude which nationals must take. This is notably true in the Christian response to governmental or official requirements, which often contrast so sharply with those of the more Christianized governments from which missionaries come that they seem intolerable.

The new groups have further problems in adjusting their new faith to social conditions, many of which are rooted in long-established religious beliefs. How far shall the marriage customs of India and China be taken over into Christian practice? How shall Persian polygamy be dealt with? How much truth and how much error is in the African belief in evil spirits? Ought the Christian Church in Siam to attempt to speed life up, or is it better to maintain the easier mode of life that leaves room for quiet and meditation? Can ancestor "worship" in China and emperor worship in Japan be Christianized and integrated into the Christian Church? Can Buddhist feasts and African seasonal dances be absorbed in Christianity, as the early Christians took over an existing feast and made our Christmas celebration? How shall the Christians of Japan and India bring their religion to bear on the new industrial conditions that threaten to overturn their social order? How shall the Christians of Egypt change the agricultural system of the Nile valley so that the fellahin

can have full rights? How shall the evangelicals of Guatemala retain the use of their favorite musical instrument, the marimba, when it is associated with drunken orgies, dances, and other practices not worthy of the gospel?

In regard to African social customs there is more than one possible attitude to take. The course commonly adopted, it is to be feared, is to repress them, as wholly unworthy of Christians. [Yet] the customs have grown up out of some felt need and represent something of value to the people. Not all of them are unclean and false; very often in the heart of an unclean and false custom there is something admirable, and Africans will admit that many of the repugnant elements are not really essential. To sublimate means not to transplant the whole of any custom, good or bad, but to seek out the good kernel in things evil and to make it serve the interest of a higher moral and spiritual life. All that is best in the African's past experience should be enlisted into the service of Christ and his Church.[17]

The world bristles with problems of practical application of the Christian faith. But they all call for observing what Christ commanded and all are within the field of the Christian faith and its adherents. Messengers from other lands introduce it, but its main task belongs to nationals. They can be helped by their brethren, but at the last the load presses down on their own shoulders. The complications to which we are accustomed in an habituated Christian environment are serious enough, but they are far less serious than those which Christian believers face in non-Christian surroundings. The need is even

[17] Edwin W. Smith, "The Golden Stool" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), p. 273.

deeper, the difficulty immeasurably greater, the available human force smaller.

Yet everywhere these groups of Christian believers, large and small, are facing their task and making their programs. Their influence in a national life is much greater than their numbers would promise, because they are the only religious groups who take this form of obligation so seriously. They are closely integrated into their brotherhood around the Name into which they have been baptized, and they have a sense of fellowship with others of the same brotherhood in all lands of the earth. It is not until this sense of wide brotherhood is formed that the Christian faith can be said to have done its work or fulfilled its mission.

Further Suggested Reading

Robert E. Speer, "The Church and Missions" (Doubleday, Doran, 1926), Chapters II, III.

E. Stanley Jones, "The Christ of the Indian Road" (Abingdon Press, 1925).

Cleland B. McAfee, "Changing Foreign Missions" (Revell, 1927), Chapters VII-X.

Daniel J. Fleming, "Attitudes Toward Other Faiths" (Association Press, 1928).

E. Stanley Jones, "Christ at the Round Table" (Abingdon Press, 1928), Chapter XI.

Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, Chapter XIII.

Arthur J. Brown, "The Why and How of Foreign Missions" (Missionary Education Movement, revised edition, 1921).

Part III

THE CHRISTIAN PROGRAM

Suggestions for Study IX

With this study we begin the third part of the course, considering the Christian program in some detail. Two studies discuss the major lines of the program (IX, X); the next points out some present movements toward the program (XI); and the last suggests some things that need to be done (XII).

1. Introductory.

a. The object of the Church's program. Is it worded as you would have it? What do you conclude regarding the use of legislation in a moral program?

b. Attitudes toward the program. Three are described. Which of them prevails in your own circle?

c. Quality and needs of the program. Do you agree that some Christians are not expected to be leaders?

2. The major lines of the Church's program.

a. It is concerned with individual opportunity.

(1) Because individuals and small groups lead the masses.

(2) Because it is for all classes, including the underprivileged.

(3) Because its initial duty, and the necessity of all its work, requires the changing of the attitude of individuals.

b. It is concerned with the family.

(1) Think carefully through the list of disintegrating influences and answer the questions at the end of the list.

(2) Does the prevalence of divorce seem a good reason to consider the reconstruction of the family idea?

(3) Why is child labor a definite concern of the Church? Does it not involve the Church too deeply in commercial or industrial complications?

(4) Discuss the added social evils that threaten the family.

(5) Discuss the pros and cons of the family altar as part of the program of the Church in behalf of the family.

Notebook: Analyze in your own mind the church you know best—your own if possible—and write what you think it would accept as its actual program, the lines along which it really means to work. See if it provides for creating or preserving individual opportunity for full personal development and whether it is a steadying force in family life. This will involve knowing whether its membership has been marked by family disintegration or whether it could be counted a hindrance to family decay in the community. So far as you know, are the church families holding together noticeably better than are outside families?

STUDY IX

THE PROGRAM SET OUT BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Object of the Church's Program. The Christian Church is the brotherhood of believers formed around the Christian faith. It is engaged fundamentally in the intricate task of converting belief into life; that is, of bringing the whole of life into harmony around the principles of Christ. The religious life is never simple and there is reason to fear any theory of it that overlooks its complexity. "It does not take much of a man to be a Christian but it takes all there is of him." Here on one side are the spirit and life of Jesus, discoverable in him; here on the other side is the life of one of his followers combined with the lives of a multitude of other followers. The problem of the Church is to transform the spirit and life of its members into the spirit and life of Jesus. This widens to the task of applying the same spirit and life through the believers to the whole circle of human life around them. No one faces this duty without discovering its intricacy and difficulty. Good will is not enough; intelligence in high degree is required.

The real mission of the Church, as given by its Founder, is to create an inclusive human fellowship,

a family of humanity around the fatherhood of God; or, to use the term of Jesus, to establish the Kingdom of God among men. . . . While there are some magnificent exceptions, the Church as such issues no definite, clear call to protect and develop the human values. Economic exploitation, with all of its attendant woes and tragedies; racial prejudice, with its increasingly threatening cleavages; and international selfishness and anarchy, with its inevitable consummation in war, are all in the saddle and riding civilization to its death, while the Church debates Darwinism, makes feeble gestures toward unity, and gets all fussed up over prayer books and what not. . . . The greatest moral adventure this age offers is to follow the rule of love as given by Jesus, and make it operative in the fields of industry, race, and international action. Does the Church dare lead the way?[1]

How far does that paragraph represent your own church? What of this more violent word?

Since the thirteenth century the Church has consistently encouraged men's blood lust and avarice and has discouraged every approach to human and kindly feeling. . . . Emancipation from the Churches is still the essential condition of improvement, particularly in America where the Churches have more influence than in Europe. . . . Of all requisitions for the regeneration of society the decay of religion seems to me to have the best chance of being realized.[2]

Making allowance for bitterness and cynicism, does the saying represent serious fact? Has the Church been failing in making belief effective in life?

Note another point of view in a letter from Dr.

[1] The Christian Century, March, 1928.

[2] Bertrand Russell and Dora Russell, "Prospects of Industrial Civilization" (Century, 1923), p. 218.

James Denney, the Scotch theologian and publicist, written during a visit to the United States and Canada:

At present I feel very distrustful of the organized action of the Church to promote legislation even for Christian ends, or ends which can be represented as Christian. . . . The multiplication of laws and the deterioration of character to a large extent keep pace with each other, and I believe it is one of the lessons the Church needs to learn that it can help society best by minding its own business and letting legislature mind its. There is a whole crowd of ministers going in for "social" reform, mainly because they have no gospel; and because, like a certain class of politicians, they think this is a good way to secure a following. But to say this without throwing cold water on Christian zeal for improving the conditions in which people live, or without seeming to be heartless or indifferent to the wrongs of the poor, may be difficult; but it is just as needful to say, "Put not your trust in Parliament," as "Put not your trust in princes."[3]

May there not be truth in both positions? Are there not other ways of advancing social goods besides legislation? But is either position wholly right? Can the Church make its gospel effective without combating evils which must be controlled first of all by legislation? From the religious point of view, of course, legislation can never be counted final; the hope is that need for it will be outgrown, as has already occurred in many lives. You do not refrain from killing your neighbor or from robbing his house or from libeling him because the law forbids it.

[3] Sir W. Robertson Nicoll, "Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll" (Hodder & Stoughton, 1925), p. 137.

The inhibition lies without your own spirit. The laws might be abrogated to-morrow without making any change in your action in such matters. But this is still beyond many citizens, and legislation is the initial way of dealing with situations which society has not yet outgrown in spirit. Can the Church stand altogether aloof from it? Note the words of J. M. Keynes, a familiar writer on economic subjects:

> The events of the coming year will not be shaped by the deliberate acts of statesmen, but by the hidden currents flowing constantly beneath the surface of political history, of which no one can predict the outcome. In one way only can we influence these hidden currents—by setting in motion those forces of instruction and imagination which change opinion. The assertion of truth, the unveiling of illusion, the dissipation of hate, the enlargement and instruction of men's hearts and minds, must be the means.[4]

The first demand is for an increased number of thoughtful believers who try to know the facts which the world is called to face, bringing their intelligence, and not merely their emotions, to bear on them. It was the creation of light which started order out of chaos, Gen., ch. 1. Seeing things as they are is as necessary as the will to make them what they ought to be. The blunders of the good are often as great an obstacle in the way of the Kingdom as the plots of the wicked.

Attitudes Toward the Church's Program. In the places where Christianity is best known and most influential it encounters three attitudes, similar to those taken toward other religions (Study VII).

[4] Quoted in Harris Franklin Rall's "Christianity To-Day" (Cokesbury, 1928), p. 39.

1. *Indifference, rising to opposition.* (*a*) Sometimes it is merely a preoccupation with other interests that makes religion seem foreign to one's life. Sometimes it is positive dislike of the attitude toward life which religion requires.

There can be little doubt that *all* the churches and *all* the faiths are confronted to-day with a growing indifference to *all* organized religion. In the opinion of many persons, the real struggle of to-morrow will not be between this or that kind of religion, but rather between the persons who insist on a religious interpretation of life and duty and those who completely ignore it. Jew, Protestant, and Catholic alike are coming to see that their main enemy to-day is irreligion and paganism, pure and undefiled. It is quite possible that in the near future we may witness in this country an anticlerical movement of an unprecedented character. Men are coming to the point where they resent the interference of religious leaders and agencies with the organization of their own personal lives. They resent the Protestant support of prohibition and the Catholic attack on birth control.[5]

One of the papers presented to the Jerusalem Conference was by Professor Rufus M. Jones, on "Secular Civilization and the Christian Task." The opening sentences are:

No student of the deeper problems of life can very well fail to see that the greatest rival of Christianity in the world to-day is not Mohammedanism, or Buddhism, or Hinduism, or Confucianism, but a world-wide secular way of life and interpretation of the nature of things. Two thirds of the entire population of the United States have no definite connection or affiliation with any form of organized Christianity. . . . There are whole townships in all parts of Amer-

[5] "Occasional Paper" of The Inquiry, November, 1927.

ica in which there is no form of organized religion and where no adequate effort is made to interpret spiritual life to little children born within the area.

A few unimportant societies have developed in America for the purpose of propagating atheism or other antichristian ideas, but they are less to be considered than this popular neglect.

(*b*) The substitutes proposed for religion vary. Some pin their faith to science, some to the widening of human culture, many to something in the nature of inevitable progress, a principle whose origin and support they do not know but in which they believe with fairly religious earnestness. His biographer points out that Lord Bryce gravely doubted this "inevitable moral progress" of the race. As he read history, humanity did not march upward in an unbroken and continuous ascent.

There were halts on the way and serious relapses. "Though the balance is clearly on the credit side of the account, we must watch the experiment [of democracy] with sobriety rather than with exultation." He felt our own time to be a period of relapse, "the saddest part of it being the virulence of hatred, one of the worst of human passions." [6]

In Professor Jones's paper the expressions are quite as definite:

The "darker side" of secular civilization is very much in evidence, and it is an ominous fact. Optimists may talk of "cosmic progress" or the "inevitable forward sweep of things." They may dream of the universe as a kind of moving stair—an escalator—that insistently "goes up." The cold facts of

[6] Herbert A. Fisher, "James Bryce" (Macmillan, 1927), Vol. II, p. 274.

history silently refute this easy, rose-water view. Human "progress" is not "inevitable." It depends essentially on the moral and spiritual coöperation of individuals and social groups. Blind cosmic forces do not push the world of men up into beauty, truth, and goodness. These supreme realities of life are the fruit of dedicated spirits, coöperating with God. They do not flourish in a world absorbed in a rush for material gains or bent on quick, ephemeral pleasures. Speed of travel, utilization of material forces, conquest of the air by flight, discovery of radio vibration, are no substitute for love and sacrifice, for insight and vision, for the experience of God and the enjoyment of fellowship with him.[7]

2. *Intolerance, rising to bigotry.* This occurs frequently within the Christian ranks, dividing their forces. Sometimes it arises from devotion to some one phase or expression of the Christian system, substituted by its advocates for the whole. Sometimes it arises from objection to the whole idea of religion or to some objectionable manifestation of it. The former is more difficult and dangerous.

Protestants realize that many Roman Catholics do not count them fellow Christians. They can be "saved" on sufferance, because of irremovable ignorance, but they are not considered sincere and intelligent Christian brethren. Are Protestants entirely free from this same attitude? Do any churches in your community refuse to fellowship with other churches? On what theory do they proceed in this refusal, and is it a Christian theory? If you do not know, might it not be helpful to your own Christian understanding to have a sincere advocate of this attitude explain it fully and accurately?

[7] Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. I, p. 258.

Is there any such thing as justifiable intolerance? Society does not tolerate some personal ideas, such as polygamy, free love, disregard of the rights of private property, unlimited expression of opinion about other people. Can religion tolerate ideas which destroy it? What is the real meaning of intolerance? Manifestly, it is not the same as disagreement or disapproval. It must be some form of unjustified narrowness, refusing to lengthen the diameter of the circle wherein different views may be accepted as still Christian. Therein lies its danger. It may make of Christianity such a narrow thing that men are not drawn to it; it may exclude good men from the Christian group and so weaken it; it may develop a holier-than-thou spirit that is directly contrary to Christian love and fraternity. But it is common enough among Christian groups to be reckoned on in any Christian program.

3. *Intelligence, resulting in sympathetic understanding.* This appears both within and without the Christian ranks. It is the only attitude which the Church can use in its program. Mutual trust arises from understanding and this is the outcome of conference and fraternal discussion. It is a prime necessity to know why Christian people think as they do, why they take their positions, why they refuse to do what might have been expected. The French saying, "To understand all is to pardon all," is not true in experience but it represents a long advance for many Christians in their relation to Christian groups from which they differ.

The Quality and Needs of the Church's Program. The program of the Church is laid out for service,

not for self-preservation. It faces outward. A church sometimes reports at the end of a year that it has "held its own." Possibly conditions may exist when this is creditable; generally it means defeat in an aggressive organization such as the Church is meant to be. The natural program will cover what most people will call impossible projects, reckoning on forces which outsiders do not know.

Only the foolishness of faith knows how to assume the brotherhood of men and to create it by the help of the assumption. A religious ideal is always a little absurd because it insists on the truth of what ought to be true but is only partly true; it is, however, the ultimate wisdom, because reality slowly approaches the ideals which are implicit in its life.[8]

Intelligent Churchmen talk of hopes and plans which are folly to some observers. The ideal generally seems visionary. One of the early Christians said that it would be so, Acts 2:17. And because nobody likes to seem visionary, churches sometimes tone down their programs until they lose all daring and challenge. A new charter of an American home mission agency declares its purpose to be "to extend the gospel of Christ in all its fullness and the service of Christ in all its implications." Would not that be a good charter for a Church?

For its proper program the Church needs (1) the leadership of some and (2) the spirit of many. Nothing in the Christian faith insures that all its adherents will become leaders. Moses exclaimed, "Would that all Jehovah's people were prophets!" Num. 11:

[8] Reinhold Niebuhr, "Does Civilization Need Religion?" (Macmillan, 1927), p. 44.

29, but they are not and Jehovah does not "put his Spirit upon them" for that purpose. There are degrees of leadership, with loyal adherents scattered all along the line, each essential in his place yet subordinate to leadership. We all carry into our religion our natural traits and qualities and only the grace of God can overcome those which unfit us for cooperative service. It was the man with one talent who used it least worthily, Matt. 25:24-28. Men with the minimum of responsibility are always in greater danger than those who carry the major burden. It is easiest to criticize the conspicuous men; there are fewer of them and every action is more noticeable. But they are generally trying more faithfully than their critics to do their full share. Effort is being made in recent years to increase and train leadership, but it is not meant to replace a loyal spirit in the rank and file. Leaders cannot make a loyal Church but a loyal Church can make leaders. Indeed, the greatest Church leaders have come from the influence of parents or teachers who were themselves obscure but who maintained a spirit under which potential leadership developed.

The Major Lines in the Church's Program. 1. *Related to individual opportunity.* With all its social accent, Christianity is essentially an individual faith. It cannot allow the individual to be overlooked or blotted out in the social process, whether industrial, economic, political, or racial. In a Church program nothing can take the place of attention to the individual, his right relation to God and to his fellows, his opportunity for progress, and his share of responsibility for the general good.

The ultimate test of any democracy is to be found in the demand that in its organization of society it shall so truly grant equality of opportunity to all who are born into its citizenship as to encourage and enable them freely to develop the fullest richness of personality of which they are capable, or, more briefly, to make the best of themselves.[9]

(*a*) Progress comes from the restlessness of the few who carry the group along with them. A recent instance is interesting. The *Eta* are a pariah class in Japanese society, the slaughterers of animals, skinners, leather workers and so on; they "executed criminals and disposed of their corpses." They were subject to indignities; their very name means "unclean" and they were called *hinin,* or "not human." They did not like it but no one emerged to lead the way out. During a parade of troops some years ago, a private stepped out of the ranks and tried to present a petition to the emperor asking that his companions be stopped from treating him as a pariah. He was sentenced to a year's imprisonment for his temerity, but an investigation started which led to many reforms. The *Eta* themselves met in a great gathering and formed the "Water Level Society," whose name carries its meaning, a society in which they asserted their right to be taken on a level with other human beings. They are claiming education for their children and the rights of other individuals.

In India the lower castes and outcastes are rising and demanding place among men. The chairman at a Christian lecture said that he himself believed in Hinduism for all men but he hoped that the Christian

[9] Bishop Charles Gore, "Christ and Society" (Scribners, 1928), p. 156.

faith would win and hold all outcastes or other depressed peoples until his own religion should awake to its obligation and give them their true place. Mahatma Gandhi has been disciplined by his caste because he insists on touching the "untouchables" and in doing about his own grounds work which belongs to the "sweeper" caste. The difficulty is increased by the religious root of the caste system, just as in the early slavery discussion in the West it was argued that Scripture requires the subjugation of the Negro race. Until it was uprooted from religious ground, the question could not be calmly discussed. Nor can caste be calmly discussed now in India. A growing number insist that caste is no essential part of the Hindu system, and so can be discarded without impiety. As this idea gains, the attack on caste will be more hopeful.

The native Church in Japan and India is committed to the side of the aspiring groups. Nothing in the West is quite comparable to Eastern caste, but racial taboos and occupational disfavors offer the same form of problem. The Church cannot be silent here without in so far failing its gospel. The rights of individuals of the nonprevailing type, no matter what it is, constitute the most serious single problem of American social life to-day. Our problem is to give the best specimens of other races their full opportunity. If they are bound by their undeveloped group they lose the opportunity which they have earned. On the other hand if they desert their group its other members lose the value of their original contribution.

(*b*) The spirit of the Church itself needs safe-

guarding here. When it draws arbitrary lines within its own life, magnifying certain types and minimizing others, it receives the condemnation of its own Book, James 2:1-9. It must be a place where "the rich and the poor meet together," since the Lord "is the maker of them all," Prov. 22:2. Class churches, snobbery among Church members, special rights for special classes, exclusive Church membership, and all such things hinder a right program. The Church must stand in principle and in practice for the opportunity of the individual, the uplifting of the depressed, the rights of minorities in religion and society. Is this easy in your own church? Are social or racial lines drawn there which hinder some worthy people from fellowship in it? What agencies in your church tend to carry out this part of the Christian program? Is your Bible school open to all who need it? Would your young people welcome to their society young people from other social levels than their own, if they were otherwise worthy? How representative is the official life of your church? Is it drawn from only one class?

(*c*) The Church needs to keep persistently concerned for the winning of new individual believers to the Christian faith. The number of churches which neglect this simple task will surprise anyone who will study his own denomination. Do you know the facts about your own church? Have the individuals of all sorts in your community any real reason to suppose that they are of concern to your church? Do they probably know what your program is so that they can honestly decide whether they want to share in it; or has your only appeal to them been based on their own

good, the saving of their souls? Might not a stronger appeal to some be a call to help in executing a challenging program of service? Recall the experience of Moses with Hobab, Num. 10:29-33. The first proposal, that he should go with them because it would do him good, failed with Hobab, but when Moses urged that he could be of help, Hobab yielded and joined the ranks of Israel. Strong men are not apt to be drawn by a program which merely helps the Church; they are more apt to join a Church which helps others.

2. *Related to the family.* While the individual is the unit in the human race, the family is the unit in society and therefore in the Church as an organization. In various forms it is the earliest and oldest social institution. (*a*) Yet the family has always had enemies and has always been subject to disintegrating influences. No list of its present enemies can be exhaustive, but the following at least are at work:

(1) Excessive individualism, which leads one member to resent the limitations demanded by family responsibility. A mistaken idea of "liberty"; uncontrolled incompatibility.

(2) Diversity of individual interests, with consequent loss of a sense of family responsibility for all the members, parents and children going their independent ways for pleasure and friendship.

(3) Economic ambitions which make it difficult to maintain family relations and the costs of a home; the high cost of living.

(4) Changed living conditions in cities, which hinder forming permanent group relations in the com-

munity, many "homes" being transient dwelling places.

(5) Neglect of training in the elements that make up a sound family relation, resulting in careless forming of marriages.

(6) Relaxing of the idea of obedience, preventing helpful relations between parents and children.

(7) Low ideals of pleasure or happiness, leading to drinking and the gratification of the passions, making it easy to renounce marriage ties which are irksome for the moment.

(8) Indifference to religion and a consequent neglect of higher obligations and purity of life.

(9) Loss of the religious idea of marriage, replacing it with thought of marriage as a convenience to be maintained at the wish of those who are parties to it.

The list could be extended. What would you add to it? Where families have broken up within your own circle, what were the real rather than the ostensible reasons? Do they not generally include selfishness, the most serious enemy of religion? In the Chicago courts during 1928 a total of 9621 divorce decrees were granted. Of these 4173 were for cruelty, 3944 for desertion, 1058 for drunkenness, 481 for marital infidelity, the charges obviously being sometimes duplicated. In eighty-five per cent of the cases there were no children, but in the others the total number of children was 5664. Do you not feel that religion is deeply concerned in such a situation, and are you not sure that the "causes" given are surface conditions, the real causes lying in the spirit and life of the people involved? *Why* is one cruel, or drunken,

or unfaithful, and *why* does one desert a family? This is far more important than the fact which results.

(*b*) Proposals are made for the entire reconstruction of the family, its binding qualities to be relaxed and only its volitional qualities to be continued. Companionate marriage is a method of gratifying such physical and social desires as may not involve the care of new lives. Two people are to live together, with all that this involves, without assuming responsibility for children. Most advocates agree that in case children are born the marriage cannot be lightly dissolved. But the marriage, with this provision, rests on the volition of its parties; no one else is supposed to have a stake in it. Society must not impose its iron hand on two free souls. All the new proposals arise from the thought that marriage must not impose restrictions on its parties. There must be enjoyment but not burden; rights but no duties; pleasure but no obligation.

The increase of divorce is given as reason for this release of bonds. The increase is ominous. The trouble is that the new proposals all adopt the line of least resistance, making proper what divorcing people desire: this is obviously what people want; let us open the way to it with least difficulty. Divorces are accepted as in line with human progress.

The Church cannot be indifferent to this attitude because it involves the inmost sanctities of human life and relationship, and because so generally it involves the rights of children, an issue always vital to an institution which traces back to One who loved little children.

(*c*) Church action regarding child labor has been resented on the ground that it brings religion into a region where its principles do not apply. Certain industries plead that they need child labor and can use it without injury to the child. The Church has taken strong ground in opposition; failing to do so has been to its shame. It has learned to oppose city conditions which deny to childhood its freedom and enrichment. Francis Thompson, the poet, who wandered for years in the streets of London, observed the children:

> If Christ stood amidst your London slums, he could not say, "Except ye turn and become as little children." Far better your children were cast from the bridge of London than that they should become as one of *these* little ones! Could they be gathered together and educated in the truest sense of the word, could the children of the nation at large be so educated as to cut off the future recruits to the ranks of darkest England, then it would need no astrology to forecast the horoscope of to-morrow. . . . Who grasps the child grasps the future.[10]

Child labor has not yet ceased in America. A proposed prohibitive amendment to the Constitution failed, but not all advocates of the movement agreed with the amendment itself. Yet some of the reasoning against it reveals plainly that large areas of American thinking have not accepted a Christian position.

(*d*) Other social evils affect the family and concern the Church. Dangerous amusements, vicious forms of pleasure, careless use of the human body,

[10] Everard Meynell, "Life of Francis Thompson" (Scribners, 1926), p. 80.

refusal of personal restraint in relation to other human beings—all such evils imperil the family. The Church has sometimes itself been divisive, laying plans for social pleasure and activity which separate the family into fragments, dividing its loyalty. Mothers have complained that their children can never be at home because of Church clubs and programs. Later, they complain that the Church provides nothing for their adolescent children, leaving all such provision to commercializing agencies. The Church, meanwhile, is in a trying position, with its duty clear but the method of doing it uncertain. How is your church serving the actual family life of your community? Does it bind the parts of the family together or are any of its plans really disintegrating influences?

(*e*) Thought must be given to suitable ways of bringing the meaning and value of religion to bear on the family as it now exists. In every age the family altar is spoken of as "disappearing." Its actual historical use is doubtless exaggerated. There was never a time when it was either universal or so common as deprecating speakers assume. The problem in each age is to find feasible ways for observing family worship—some expression of religion which helps to bind the family together. It is no more difficult now than it has always been, if we can trust the expressions of parents in all periods. The strong have always found a way; the less earnest have never been able to do so. The Church has to keep before responsible members of families the necessity of religious practices in maintaining the spirit and unity of its life. The method will be found by each family that really desires it. But failure here explains as

much family breakdown as any other one cause, and it is in direct line with Church obligation.[11]

Further Suggested Reading

William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapter VII.

John M. Versteeg, "Christianity at Work" (Abingdon Press, 1925), especially Part III.

"Christianity and Social Adventuring" (Century, 1927), especially pp. 135-164. Edited by Jerome Davis.

Shailer Mathews, "Jesus on Social Institutions" (Macmillan, 1928), Chapter III.

[11] Discussion of further items in the major lines of the Church's program is continued in the next study.

Suggestions for Study X

This study continues the former discussion as to the major lines of the Church's program. Think carefully over the former study, bringing to mind especially the two "lines" of the program suggested at the end. Including those two, nine major lines are suggested involving the concern of the Church: 1. individual opportunity; 2. the family; 3. education; 4. industry; 5. commerce; 6. community life; 7. national life; 8. international life; 9. Church life and growth.

As you know your own community, which of these items is being best followed by your church? Is any one being neglected? Can you explain why?

Work through the study in an inquiring spirit. Do not hesitate to differ from its suggestions. Such questions as these arise very naturally:

1. This course you are now studying is part of the Church's program of "religious education"; how wide is the interest of your own church in the subject?

2. Are the colleges of your Church well sustained? Do they maintain their distinctive Church value? How is the religious life of the students in your state university aided by the churches?

3. Could your church safely take action regarding a "strike" in your community or regarding a low wage scale in a factory or other industry? Would this make a breach in the church?

4. Is the commerce of your community coöperative with the Christian ideals? What stake has the church in foreign commerce, loans, and so forth?

5. Is the city more hurtful or more helpful to the Christian religion? Where would you find it easier to live a worthy Christian life—in the city, the village, the country? Why?

6. Which of the five "bonds of world unity" seems promising to you? Can you put your finger on any distinctive thing your church does to sustain in your church a world-mindedness?

7. Is your church really in favor of Church union on any terms that are really worth discussing? What form of Church union would work effectively in your community?

Notebook: Write any restatement you would want to make of the nine "lines" suggested, adding others that seem to you omitted, but rearranging them in the order of pressing importance in your community as you have studied it, putting them at least in groups of major, secondary, and lesser importance, if it proves impossible to scale them separately.

STUDY X

THE PROGRAM SET OUT BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (*Continued*)

THE preceding study surveyed the program of the Church as it is related to (1) individual opportunity and (2) the family. In this study we consider further lines.

3. *Related to education.* This takes three forms: (*a*) education in religion itself; (*b*) general education carried on under the direct guidance of the Church, as in Christian academies and colleges; (*c*) the contribution of religious influences to state-controlled education.

(*a*) What is generally called "religious education" is somewhat vaguely understood and is still finding its way among thoughtful Church leaders. No one definition or statement of it has yet been universally accepted, though everyone knows in general what he means by it.

Religious education should seek to bring religious ideas, attitudes, and motives as conditioning and controlling factors into every relation and function involved in human life. It is not a substitute for the work of the Divine in human life, but sets as its task such working with God in bringing about right religious adjustment that the highest spiritual development of the learner may take place. . . . The ob-

jective of religious education from the viewpoint of the evangelical denominations is complete Christian living, which includes personal acceptance of Christ as Saviour and his way of life and, under normal circumstances, membership in a Christian Church; the Christian motive in all life choices; and the wholehearted participation in and constructive contribution to the progressive realization of a social order controlled by Christian principles.[1]

By all agreement this phase of the Church's task in education means the developing of Christian personalities: training of Christian believers, younger and older, in the Christian faith, and helping them to do their own thinking as their fathers did when the faith was new. It includes the whole of life. It involves making the Sunday School more a *school* than a mere *Sunday* experience. The familiar evangelistic accent which brought young people to Christian confession and Church membership must not be abandoned, but we must frankly recognize the failure of all existing agencies to lay wide and secure foundations for a living religion. The experiences of the war underscored what had long been noted: that young men and women could be under Sunday School and other Church training for years and still be profoundly ignorant of the real meaning of the Christian religion. The methods of teaching were defective, the organization of the curriculum was incorrect, the content of the lessons was inadequate, and the appeal to the whole personality was lacking. If this seems a severe indictment, it is made by those who love the

[1] Paul Vieth, "The Development of a Curriculum of Religious Education" (International Council of Religious Education, 1928), pp. 10, 38.

Sunday School most, not by outside critics who might be allowed to go their own way. Criticism has not been merely destructive; it is constructive, and the whole process of producing Christian personalities by all the methods of the Church is under earnest study. The second volume of the Report of the Jerusalem Conference of April, 1928, is devoted entirely to religious education as an essential part of the mission of the Church around the world. It is conceived in a very broad sense:

> Religious education in the Christian sense includes all efforts and processes which help to bring children and adults into a vital and saving experience of God revealed in Christ; to quicken the sense of God as a living reality, so that communion with him in prayer and worship becomes a natural habit and principle of life; to enable them to interpret the meaning of their growing experience of life in the light of ultimate values; to establish attitudes and habits of Christ-like living in common life and in all human relations; and to enlarge and deepen the understanding of the historic facts on which Christianity rests and of the rich content of Christian experience, belief, and doctrine. (Report, Vol. II, p. 4.)

This necessarily changes the method of the Church from dogmatic instruction to inspiration in thinking, helping people to find their own way by sharing experiences rather than setting them forcefully in the way. It is a wide field, gradually being brought to order.

(*b*) In earlier times the Church was almost the sole agent in giving general education and could direct it according to distinctly religious ideas. In some countries it can still do this. There remain many institu-

tions established by the Church and still under its control. Most Roman Catholic authorities deny the right of the State as such to administer education, claiming it as a Church function because primarily the duty of parents as spiritual founders of the family.[2] Protestants have willingly accepted governmental action but have claimed the right to conduct schools also under their own direction.

Church Schools must of course have as worthy educational equipment and standards as any, and in addition such distinctive religious qualities as will justify the sacrifice required to sustain them. The tendency of such institutions is to imitate secular schools at all points, yet their only excuse for existence is their difference from those schools. If they are not clearly religious in their tone and method, why should Church people support them? If they are not places where religious truth and religious spirit form friendly contacts with every form of human knowledge, why should they not be merged with non-Church schools? How does this ideal impress you?

Not long ago I met one of our great schoolmasters—a veteran in that high service. "Where in your time-table do you teach religion?" I asked him. "We teach it all day long," he answered. "We teach it in arithmetic, by accuracy. We teach it in language, by learning to say what we mean—yea, yea, and nay, nay. We teach it in history, by humanity. We teach it in geography, by breadth of mind. We teach it in handicraft, by thoroughness. We teach it in astronomy, by reverence. We teach it in the playground, by fair play. We teach it by kindness to animals, by

[2] References are given fully in Winfred E. Garrison's "Catholicism and the American Mind" (Willett, 1928), especially Chapters VI, VII.

courtesy to servants, by good manners to one another, and by truthfulness in all things. We teach it by showing the children that we, their elders, are their friends and not their enemies."[3]

This makes "religion coextensive with life"; can it safely be made anything else in a Christian college?

(*c*) State-controlled institutions are multiplying in both the West and the East. The newly emerging civilizations claim education as a State function, saying that its primary purpose is the making of citizens. In some countries (China, Turkey, Persia), privately controlled institutions are being crowded out. The duty of the Church remains. The throngs of young men and women gathered at educational centers in America give the Church an opportunity for religious influence far beyond any that it could find elsewhere. If the State cannot furnish the element of religious training, it cannot hinder its citizens from providing it at their own charges. Various experiments for this purpose are in process in America with varying results. These experiments include the strengthening of the local church in a university community by financial grants to enrich its program; adding workers to local church staffs; maintaining accepted and accredited courses of religious type in allied Bible schools adjacent to the university; maintaining organized churches for the student body of the sort to which they are accustomed at home but in which here the officers are from faculty and student groups; and developing schools of religion in which Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews unite in instruction,

[3] L. P. Jacks, "A Living Universe" (Doran, 1924), pp. 50, 51.

with the way open for other religious workers to enter the scheme when they are able to do so. All these plans have both merits and difficulties, but their number and variety show that the Church is taking student life seriously.

Though the results of these experiments vary, it is already proved that young people in State institutions need not be indifferent to the Church or to religious thinking. Church thinking and practice are sure to be profoundly modified, but the change will be at least intelligent. Dr. Hugh S. Magill, secretary of the International Council of Religious Education, speaks of many questions regarding the place of religion in public education, and adds:

> The solution of these great problems calls for the wisest statesmanship, the clearest vision, and the most resolute courage. The Protestant forces of the continent, with a concept and vision that rise far above the limits of sectarian influence, must move forward unitedly, facing together the impelling task, for the sake of our children, for the sake of our homes, for the sake of our churches, for the sake of our beloved land, and for the sake of the humanity of the world.

4. *Related to industry.* This is a comparatively late issue because the industrializing of life is recent. In its newer forms, as in Japan and some parts of India, it constitutes one of the most serious problems of the newly formed Christian Church. The subheading of the action of the Jerusalem Council on this subject is: "Christ the Lord of All Life." It points out that the duty of the Church regarding industry arises from three elements in its message: Christ's teaching as to the sanctity of personality;

Christ's teaching as to brotherhood; Christ's teaching as to corporate responsibility.

(*a*) Industrial enterprises tend to treat men as they do machines, scrapping them if they can be replaced, disregarding their existence between factory hours, measuring their value solely by their ability to produce profitable goods. A machine has no responsibility for living, no social demands, no leisure to be wisely used, no claims to consideration as a contributor to the final result. Men have all this. How can industry distinguish between machines and men, recognizing men as voluntary sharers in the results?

In an industrial order progress comes to be measured by things produced and consequent profits to the owners of the industry. How fully would you, as a citizen, agree with this estimate of the situation?

I think it obvious that the fortunes of our civilization, both material and spiritual, depend in the major degree on the character, ethical and economic, of its industry, and in the minor (but still important) degree on the character of its politics. If our civilization goes wrong, or fails to achieve real value, in the matter of industry, going right in the matter of politics will be no great triumph. Healthy industry will give birth to healthy politics. Whether, *per contra,* healthy politics would ever give birth to healthy industry, seems to me in any case highly doubtful; but I would add that in the present condition of the world politics will not become healthy unless a healthy industry makes them so. . . . A civilization that stands on the basis of devitalized work, and earns its living by that, cannot be cured of the attendant misery by any political operations whatever, whether constitutional or revolutionary.[4]

[4] L. P. Jacks, "Constructive Citizenship" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), pp. 157, 158.

(*b*) The activity of the Church in industry is not an unwarranted intrusion into the economic realm. It is a recognition of the religious, because personal, meaning of all these questions. The men in the offices and at the machines are first of all human beings with religious values. Industrial questions affect individual human life, the family, the entire social organization, the Church and its support and leadership, and the Kingdom of God as a brotherhood of men in the world. Is it a sound brotherhood when coffee can be sold cheap in America because laborers are paid from eight to fifty cents a day in Central America, a lower wage scale than is required for decent living? Is the Church not concerned when housing conditions in South America cannot be corrected for lack of income, with the rest of the world profiting by the low income? Can a world brotherhood be built on such terms?

(*c*) The Church is not primarily concerned with laborers; it is equally concerned with employers and their duties and rights. It is more injurious to do a wrong than to suffer a wrong. It is more serious for a man to have a whole group of laborers dependent on him than to be among the dependent laborers. The issue must arise sooner or later whether it is well for a human group to be utterly dependent on the will of any one man or of a few men. The element of precariousness in one's life support ought to be lessened or removed as fully as possible. It breeds a wrong relation among men for laborers to feel that their livelihood depends on actions over which they can have neither control nor influence. Legal safeguards can be thrown around such situations to some degree,

but when economic considerations press as they do nothing but spiritual influences can safeguard them fully. A spirit of brotherhood must be developed which will not disregard the rights and needs of others even when advantage might be taken of them. This is the natural task of the Church.

(*d*) The issue emerges when industrial disturbances arise. They are always times of one-sided earnestness, seldom of balanced judgment. In such times the Church has its great opportunity to bring out the truth. The details may need to be learned by independent investigation, but the principles that must prevail in the end are already known. The Church is no respecter of persons and it specializes on the rights of no one group, but it is required to insist on human rights everywhere and on the duty of the men on both sides to be just. A recent Roman Catholic book on social service is named, "Justice First." It was a saying of President Woodrow Wilson that benevolence is not the first thing to be sought, but justice. For this the Church must stand if it stands at all for its gospel.

5. *Related to commerce.* This is closely related to industry and yet it constitutes a separate element in the duty of the Church.

(*a*) Professor Rauschenbusch called commerce the most unchristianized area of life, "the unregenerated section of our social order."[5] We agree to Christian principles in most things, even if we do not practice them. Here we are not even sure about accepting the principles. In everything but business we are

[5] Walter Rauschenbusch, "Christianizing the Social Order" (Macmillan, 1912), pp. 156ff.

clear that coöperation rather than competition should be the rule in life. We are not clear on that in business. "Competition is the life of trade," but is it the death of anything else? The new Archbishop of York said recently that "to make what is now the sphere of ruthless competition an expression of true fellowship is the great need of the whole civilized world." Probably the claims of religion are counted most visionary and ridiculous at this point. Our commercial system is largely built on the idea of unlimited competition—the stronger winning, the weaker going to the wall. "It is a swift race, and the slower man gets left."

(*b*) Yet this is by no means so radically true as was once the case. There is much kindness among commercial men, and many a merchant or manufacturer owes his continuance to the timely aid he has received from his competitors. Such great developments as the Federal Reserve banking system have brought competing businesses into closer relations to the benefit of all. Such a spirit of commercial fellowship has grown rapidly. It is found that public interest and private advantage are better served when agencies coöperate than when they compete unlimitedly. American history is almost bewildering here. Stringent laws once forbade combinations of railroads and public utilities; some were required to dissolve. Yet now such combinations are not only encouraged but are almost required both by public opinion and by statute. In their earlier forms they magnified selfish advantage rather than service; now the service element is recognized as at least possible. The motto of one of these large combinations is:

"For the Public Good." Cynics smile at the motto, as they do at any suggestion of unselfishness. But it reveals at least that a religious principle in commerce appeals to the public.

(*c*) Commerce cannot now be conducted without some eye to profit. The Church can only insist in all its teaching and example that profit secured unfairly or without due regard to human good is really loss. Do the people of your community think of it so? Do you actually know much of the commercial life or standards of your community? How far are Christians responsible in commercial dealing? Is it right to buy in stores which oppress employees, or which issue false advertisements, even though one may not be deceived by them? Ought a merchant to buy goods which have been manufactured unfairly? When are "bargains" good?

(*d*) The Church has a large stake in commerce also because of its relation to the non-Christian parts of the world. Trade is often the most obvious and assertive arm reached out into new territories. Its spirit affects the reception of the Christian message because its agents are popularly identified with all who come from the same lands. The clash that often occurs between commercial representatives and Church representatives in non-Christian lands is always deplorable. Christian merchants sometimes send out agents of a wholly non-Christian spirit, nullifying in this way their own messengers of religion. Often, however, commercial representatives are of the highest Christian type, fellow workers with the missionaries and always strengthening their hands.

How do you estimate the large increase in foreign

commercial loans in the United States—are they likely to prove helpful or hurtful to world fellowship? In one year a billion and a quarter dollars were lent for commercial or national purposes in Latin America alone, with immense sums to European countries for similar purposes. Can the Church have any influence in making this a service of human good instead of a merely selfish investment?

6. *Related to the community life.* A "neighbor" used to mean one who lives "nigh" to one. With the growth of cities and the crowding of populations, it is difficult to maintain any sense of geographical neighborliness. On the contrary, one often knows best those who live farther away and neighborliness is not the result of being "nigh." Jesus gave a new conception in his "good Samaritan" story, Luke 10:26-37. He made an interesting turn of the question in the parable. The inquiry was, "And who is my neighbor?" The question really answered is, "To whom am I to be neighbor?" Jesus replied to this second question by showing that we are to be neighbors to those who need any help we can give. The word surpasses racial and social limitations. A neighbor is a man who shows mercy.

But this really means one who thinks of others rather than of himself, of their interests and not merely of his own. That spirit needs much increase in these days. The city is causing a double problem—in its own congested populations and in the country areas whose population is drained away. Each presents a new and perplexing religious problem.

(*a*) There are country areas of America which are as destitute of Christian opportunities and religious

provision now as they were before the land was settled from across the sea. Think over the churches you know in the open country and in villages and ask whether they are as prosperous and forceful now as they were thirty years ago. With its stress on maintaining religious institutions suited to the increased city population, the Church has not done so well by country sections with their decreased population and added complication of life. Has the moral level of the country been maintained? Are the social institutions as well guarded as they need to be? What is the effect of centralizing country life so largely around outside interests—the shrinkage of local trading centers, the forming of consolidated public schools which gather the children from wide areas, the closing of local churches and calling people to come to larger towns or cities, the widening reach of amusement places, parcel post, mail-order trading? Does the Church seem to have an adequate program for dealing with these new conditions and the changes involved? The rural communities in all lands have become so needy and so important that one entire volume of the Jerusalem Conference Report is devoted to the duty of the Christian faith regarding them. Great national leaders are turning their attention to rural conditions, which bid fair to become not less but more pressing as the population is increasingly drained away to the cities. In a paper presented to the Jerusalem Conference by Dr. Rufus M. Jones, he said:

Rural centers of life which were once nurseries of religion and of high moral endeavor have undergone an ominous change. There are still rural sections

in which religious interest has been cultivated and where it remains virile and vital, but there are, on the other hand, whole townships in all parts of America in which there is no form of organized religion and where no adequate effort is made to interpret spiritual life to the little children born within its area. (Report, Vol. I, p. 230.)

Dr. Edward C. Lobenstine tells of a conversation he had with the Chinese patriot, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, himself a Christian:

When talking to him in Shanghai I said, "Dr. Sun, what is the largest contribution that the Christian Churches can make to China?" He thought for a long time and then said, "Mr. Lobenstine, if the Christians in China could build up strong Christian rural communities, this in my mind is the largest contribution that can be made to the reconstruction of China through the Christian Churches."

(*b*) In the cities the community problem is even more difficult.

When Washington was inaugurated in 1789 . . . there were no large cities. Philadelphia had a population of 42,000. New York was next largest with 33,000, followed by Boston with 18,000 and Baltimore with 13,000. These four leading cities contained 100,000 people in all. To-day they are the homes of nearly 10,000,000 people.[6]

The polyglot city population complicates the duty of the Church. One home mission board in America regularly uses more than sixty languages. Immigrants of the first generation are handicapped by language from entering readily into American life and the sec-

[6] William P. Shriver, "What Next in Home Missions?" (Missionary Education Movement, 1928), Study IV.

ond generation finds adjustment to half-understood conditions exceedingly difficult. The tendency to settle in language groups both helps and complicates the problem. It helps in making language churches possible. It complicates in tending to confirm the conditions which need to be overcome and in magnifying the chasm between the old social life and the new life of the younger generation. Newly Americanized families tend to leave their language or race centers for more distinctively American locations. But this throws them into social connections in which they are often unwelcome, and they draw to the same location others of their own type for social fellowship. This creates further social prejudice. Jewish families are apt to congregate in this way. Unwelcomed at first by their neighbors, they welcome others of their own sort, and a new racial center is formed by those who started to break away from it.

All this constitutes a Church duty. Its institutions are not primary here; personalities are the chief concern. A new spirit of human relationship, a new sense of social responsibility, a new openness of mind are needed. No agency is so well calculated to develop the needed conditions as is the Church. The school has the young people but the Church reaches the older people as well.

Here, also, is the duty of the Church with reference to delinquency and crime. This is a whole study in itself. Sin and crime are not confined to the city, of course, and yet the city has many centers where the disintegration of social institutions makes delinquency and crime almost inevitable. In such centers the Church has its chance to maintain its redemptive and

reconstructive agencies. Christianity is not primarily concerned for the punishment of criminals nor for more stringent laws. Some observers say, in any "crime wave," "Hang a few of them; that will soon end it." The Christian faith says, "Redeem a few of them; that will end more than hanging can effect." And it is notable that the modern Church is awaking to this need. The former non-Church settlement house movement has largely given way to Church neighborhood houses, which are primarily Christian and generally have a church directly connected with them. Such work cannot support itself and has to be allied with stronger church groups in other parts of the city, but these stronger churches are increasingly organized in programs for such work.

7. *Related to national life.* The relation of the Christian Church to national actions is a delicate problem. Study I discussed it in detail; here it may be merely mentioned. The American party system makes the duty of the Church difficult. Scandals in high places are instantly turned to partisan advantage and when the Church speaks or acts it is assumed to be partisan. Definite action regarding even a moral issue is interpreted as favoring one party and so is protested by the other. In this way it often loses its force as a moral declaration. When leaders "view with alarm" the actions of officials of another party, while similar things in their own party stir less indignation, it is difficult for the Church to make a purely moral indignation effective. We need to recognize also that party hold is so strong with many Christian people that, if choice has to be made between the action of their churches and the program of

their party, they will act with their party. But the duty remains. Think over public conditions at the time you read this, see if and where Church action could be helpful in public affairs, and think out the problem connected with any such action. Can the Church properly disregard moral evils, even though they are intertwined with political programs?

8. *Related to international life.* National isolation is now virtually abandoned. Discussions center on the wisest ways of holding unavoidable relations with all other nations of the earth. Those Americans who object to the League of Nations insist that they do not expect America to sit solitary in the world. They would have the nation aid needy people everywhere and share their interests through unentangling alliances. Even the ruler of Afghanistan visits Europe and seeks commercial and social relations, reserving religious freedom. When Tibet and Afghanistan are really opened to international intercourse no doors will be closed. All this makes duty for the Church. The intertwining of interests is fraught with grave dangers unless the spirit of nations becomes fraternal.

Five bonds of world unity are seriously proposed, each of which has its place: (*a*) Finance may help to bind the world together. Men will not go to war when it means the loss of large investments, and if the money of a nation can be lent and used widely that nation will wish to maintain peace—this is the argument. Unhappily, such loans are often the cause of strife, since financiers demand protection from their own governments. Loans are often repudiated readily as release from an oppressive power. International loans in Europe did not halt the decision for

war when occasion arose. Many of us do not, therefore, find large hope in this method, though we welcome it as one way of forming international ties. (*b*) Military and official relations are proposed as a world bond. This ranges all the way from a League of Nations, with a sufficiently powerful force, to a superstate equipped for every emergency. Or might there not be an alliance of a few large and friendly powers, controlling virtually all the world and holding the rest to peace because of their overwhelming power? Every nation has its advocates of this plan. But it rests essentially on force, which is not the Christian hope. (*c*) Education and mutual understanding are the hope of many. Here again the values are obvious. Yet for decades the scholarly world went to school to Germany, and this did not prevent a terrific war. Wars and international strife do not come out of the unintelligent group but out of the most highly informed section of the nation. The spread of education in itself may do no more than increase the skill and ability of the contestants. The recent war was the most scientific, the most learned, the most intelligent the world has known; the next, if it comes, will be more so. Meanwhile it was also the most inhuman war of history in its physical effects. Education is no guarantee of the human spirit. The campaign of hatred was led by men who claimed to know the other lands best and could interpret them at their worst for that very reason. (*d*) Travel, with its increase of knowledge of other lands, is proposed as a world bond. Values are obvious here. But many travelers bring back no real understanding of other lands. World travel might make a tourist intelli-

gent; often it stiffens his arrogance and superiority. The most contemptuous references to China during its recent disturbance were made by tourists who had glanced at it in port cities and counted themselves authorities. Anatole France in his later years said:

> It is by traveling that one learns geography. And then one must know how to travel. For what is traveling? Changing your place? By no means. Traveling is changing your illusions and your prejudices.

On that definition many people never travel at all and it is obviously quite impossible for enough intelligent people to visit other lands to make this a really effective bond of union. (*e*) There is left the Christian proposal of a new spirit, a sense of human brotherhood, a claim that all races are part of the family of God. Some can travel, some can enter into the life of other nations as missionaries and educators and diplomatists, but all can be Christian in thought and manner. All can overstep limitations of race as these are met in daily life, sending every visitor from other races back to his place a friend. Here we have failed dismally, but herein lies our hope and duty. The building of an international spirit is entirely within the power of the Church. Its agencies are adapted to it, its contacts are abundant, its principles are wholly on that side. Every year ought to see in every church some distinct opportunities for broadening the world outlook of the people, breaking down prejudice, building a universal spirit.[7]

[7] In "Building International Good Will" (Macmillan, 1928), by various writers, Dr. William P. Merrill has a paper on "World Unity Through Organized Religion," which develops this point fully.

9. *Related to the Church itself.* Much of what has been said thus far will seem to observers fanciful. They will ask, Where is the Church that will do all these worthy things? And certainly one of the largest items in the program before the Church pertains to its own life and method. Some of its problems are inherent in its nature. (*a*) Two influences are always at work in corporate life. One magnifies brotherhood and unity, the other magnifies independence and liberty. When liberty is overstressed, new divisions occur; when unity is overstressed, spiritual life is limited or repressed. (*b*) The Church is a body, and yet is made up of individuals. How to be true to both, so that each person has the rights he should have and yet renders the service which the whole requires, is always an issue. (*c*) The Church holds an eternal truth under the conditions of the time in which it lives. Some magnify its eternal aspect, and are conservatists; some magnify its immediate aspect, and are modernists. Some stress the revelation once for all committed to the saints; some stress the living Spirit of God who is to guide the Church into all truth. (*d*) The gospel is a spirit but it requires a body for its expression in the world. Some believers think mainly of the spirit and are indifferent to the form; others take the form as seriously as the spirit.[8]

Each of these inherent conditions contains seeds of strife which have borne fruit in every age. The most acute question before the Church just now is that of accomplishing its own unity as it stands before

[8] Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), pp. 161-167.

the world. One would hardly suspect that we all profess the one gospel of the one Christ, believe in only one God and one way of salvation in Christ, have hope of but one eternal life in him, and accept one commission from him. Each of the great divisions—Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant—is further split up badly. The others seem to Protestants unified, but no careful observation justifies that thought. Only a strong hand maintains unity under Rome,[9] while the Orthodox (Eastern) Church has now no common center. Every Protestant survey brings results like those reported in one New England city:

> Protestantism is geographically unbalanced in Springfield. Its affinities are shamefully with the more prosperous of the population, and it has run away from the poor and needy. Its history has been characterized by competition, both denominational and between churches of the same Communion. Unless it can remedy some of these faults it cannot and ought not to succeed.[10]

How far is this true in your own community? Have your churches found a way of being aggressive and not competitive? Are they growing without weakening each other? Does their program cover the whole community, all its races, conditions, needs? Does your own particular church probably know clearly what it wants to be and do? How do you word its ideal for itself? Is there a blending of conviction and liberty in its life? Can a man differ from its

[9] Winfred E. Garrison, "Catholicism and the American Mind" (Willett, 1928), Chapter XI.

[10] Quoted by William P. Shriver in "What Next in Home Missions?" (Missionary Education Movement, 1928), p. 125.

rank and file and yet be counted within the circle of Christian brotherhood? In short, is your church prepared to be in the world what a Christian church needs to be with this complex program of bewildering opportunities? In a different connection Björnson, the Norwegian poet, once said, "A family that works together is invincible." The saying is used in an account of the Rothschild family as one secret of its great power. An early observer explained the surprising power of the Christian believers by the fact, "These Christians love one another." What comment would observers in your community make on the Christians who live there?

Further Suggested Reading

Bishop Ernest W. Barnes, "Should Such a Faith Offend?" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), Chapter XXIII.

Paul Vieth, "The Development of a Curriculum of Religious Education" (International Council of Religious Education, Chicago, 1928).

Theodore G. Soares, "Religious Education" (University of Chicago Press, 1928), especially Chapters II, III, XII.

Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. II, Chapters I, VII, X; Vol. V, Chapters IV, V, VI.

"Faith and Order," Report of Lausanne Conference (Doubleday, Doran, 1927), Subjects I, VII.

Suggestions for Study XI

The program outlined in the two preceding studies is no mere theory or dream of the Church. It is a working policy to which many individual churches and larger groups are committed. This study outlines a few present active movements.

On the corrective side the Church faces many evils. Discuss the five stages through which opposition to evil grows. Where does the prohibition movement seem to be in your community? At what stage is the antigambling movement?

On the constructive side, note two groups of movements:

1. Those in which the Church coöperates with non-Church or nonreligious forces for bringing the spirit of Christ into human life and society. Think carefully over the dangers of such coöperation. Which of the illustrations given strikes you most favorably? What is the stage of the antiwar sentiment in your community and what agencies develop it?

2. Those which are distinctly Church movements:

a. The Churches are gaining a larger degree of unity in action among themselves. Describe the main organizations in which the Churches are united. Describe some of the recent conferences to consider common tasks and problems.

b. The Churches are displaying a new vigor in the spread of the gospel—evangelism, missions, education. In which do you see largest progress in your own community? In the Church at large? In which do you place largest hope?

c. The Churches are increasingly applying religion to all of life. How is the Church enlarging its program and activity? Where is it opposed? What form of opposition is most troublesome?

Discuss the closing question of the study: What do we mean when we say that the Church "moves," or "should move"? What is the only way in which an institution like the Church can move? When is it to be blamed for not moving? Is your own Church "moving" with reference to this program?

Notebook: Write a candid statement of your own feeling at the end of this brief survey of "some movements of the Church." Do the items suggested seem to you adequate to the duty of the Church, even though they were carried to full success, or would you need to supplement the study with other duties to which the Church should at once commit itself? Are there other Church movements not included in this statement which ought to be described? Make them part of your written statement.

STUDY XI

SOME MOVEMENTS OF THE CHURCH IN ITS PROGRAM

The Christian Church as a world agency is both constructive and corrective. It presents an ideal—the Kingdom of God—and seeks to construct it in the hearts and lives of men. But it finds adverse influences at work and must counteract them. Some of its movements are therefore aimed at overthrowing evils; others, at the development of right conditions. At times in history it has seemed stagnant, unmoved by needs around it, chiefly occupied with its internal affairs and issues. Even at those times, however, there were unquiet souls who felt the urge of duty and tried to lead into wider paths. When the Church is criticized as indifferent to the call for advance, exception has always to be made in favor of earnest souls who are not indifferent. It is a large body and hard to move, yet the years show advance under pressure.

Stages of Progress Against Evils. Movements for the correction of an evil pass through several stages: (1) At first some one observes the evil regretfully, the majority taking it for granted. "It is too bad, but nothing can be done about it; such things are simply part of the order of things." Still, it is seen to be an evil. This is the period of *recognition.*

(2) Then the regret spreads and a few begin to question whether it cannot be corrected, whereupon the majority scout the proposal: "It is just like these reformers, always wanting to change things." Some urge that there are really elements of good in the supposed evil and that correction will bring in worse conditions. This is the period of *analysis.* (3) Opposition to the evil increases, however, and definite proposals for its destruction or at least its severe restriction begin to grow familiar. Any elements of good are seen to be easily secured. At this stage interests profiting by the evil become assertive and reformers are attacked as violating ancient rights. But adverse public opinion grows. It is the period of *discussion.* (4) Then a widespread conviction develops that the evil has no defense, that it serves no essential purpose, and that its abolition is only a matter of time and method. Its defenders call for restrictive rather than destructive measures. A powerful minority become propagandists against the evil, divided only on plans for dispensing with it. This is the period of *conviction.* (5) At last, sometimes after many years, a definite plan for its destruction gains ground and public opinion is crystallized into effective action. The evil is put under legal and social ban. This is the period of achievement or *correction.* Generally it comes earlier than its advocates expected and before public opinion is quite strong enough to carry its own victory. There come, therefore, times of reaction when opponents gain ground and its more timorous advocates wonder whether the destructive method was really wise.[1]

[1] Cleland B. McAfee, "The Christian Conviction" (Macmillan, 1926), pp. 204-206.

These stages are easily traced in the history of dueling or slavery or traffic in liquor. The movement against liquor is familiar to most of us. The period of correction slipped upon most people unawares, only adventurous souls having foreseen it. When the first feeling of exultation passed, and opponents of prohibition gained their breath, reaction was inevitable. The habits of generations are not quickly abandoned. Hope rests in advocates who will patiently maintain the process of developing public opinion until the destruction of the evil is taken for granted as clearly as formerly its existence had been.

All movements against prevailing evils are now in these same stages. Where would you place the anti-war feeling in your own community? Where in the world at large? Are treaties for the outlawry of war hailed with enthusiasm or are they greeted with contempt? Are proposals of permanent peace counted folly or are they accepted as a matter of course in a Christian world? A recent newspaper cartoon showed two battleships in action on the surface of the sea, with many recent peace treaties, agreements for reduction of armaments, and so on, far below in the depths. The heading was: "Ten Thousand Leagues Under the Sea." Do you think that this is what people hope, or fear, or cynically expect? The day's editorial said that America would fight if it wanted to, no matter what treaty was made. Is not the Church concerned to see, in that case, that America does not want to fight? Some day nations may not want to fight any more than decent men do now.

Consider the evil of child labor. Attacks on it have recently been called "meddlesome interference

of idealists with the affairs of practical men." Meanwhile opposition grows steadily and the period of correction awaits only the crystallizing of thought around some accepted method of prevention.

When we charge the Church with delay regarding such evils, it is only fair to keep in mind that they disappear only after a period of attack and discussion. Sudden and swift destruction is no doubt deserved but it is seldom effective. The building of an adverse public opinion is essential. And this involves the securing of a sound opinion within the Church itself regarding the evils that hinder the Kingdom of God. One of the first steps in the antiliquor movement was the divorcing of the Church itself from the evil, making it inconsistent for Church members to be engaged in the traffic. In early days not only was liquor commonly used in Christian homes but distillers and brewers might be active members or officers in the Church. The change was gradual, brought about under venturesome leaders who took the unpopular path. Similar processes are now affecting other evils. The Church may be making progress even though nothing seems to be occurring. The steady presentation of ideals in Sunday Schools, prayer meetings, societies, pulpits, is part of the movement of the Church in its program for the Kingdom of God.

Coöperative Movements Toward the Kingdom of God. Some influences which help to bring the spirit of Christ into human relations are not consciously Christian and do not appear to issue from the Church. It may be claimed, for all that, that their spirit was born of the Christian religion. However they originated, they express the spirit of Christ and should be

welcomed by the Church. Jesus corrected his disciples about variant movements, Luke 9:49, 50. Outside organizations sometimes carry on a stronger campaign for certain things of the Kingdom than does the Church itself. This is the case when the issue is the single purpose of the organization, whereas it may be merely an incident in the Church's program. (1) If labor unions develop a fraternal and cooperative spirit within their own membership, the Church has reason to rejoice, though it may be only a partial contribution to the ultimate brotherhood of the world. Chambers of commerce; fraternal clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions) with their various mottoes of service; international societies, uniting men of all races around some common interest such as law, medicine, industry, or finance; Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls, now developing in all parts of the world; and easily a hundred more such good agencies—all are in line with the Church's program. So is the support by commercial and economic interests of movements which are fundamentally moral, such as shortening hours of labor, improving working conditions, providing old-age pensions, coöperative profit-sharing, observance of law. The Church can only rejoice in the increase of good roads, transportation, extension of conveniences of family life, widening of intelligence and intercourse among communities. These are not Church enterprises but they are in the direction of its program. They leave out—sometimes they even make more difficult—the chief interest of our religion, submission of the soul to a loving God and the acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Master, but this essential

element is thus made primary in the distinctive work of the Church.

(2) Few American Christians realize how far the Christian spirit has spread in human relations. The League of Nations has established an International Labor Organization with nine principles:

1. Labor should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.
2. Employees have the right of association.
3. Wages must be adequate to maintain a reasonable standard of life, according to the time and country.
4. The eight-hour day and forty-eight-hour week are the standard to be aimed at where not now attained.
5. A weekly rest day of twenty-four hours, "which should include Sunday" wherever practicable.
6. Abolition of child labor and limitation on the labor of youths which hinders education and growth.
7. Men and women to receive equal payment for labor of equal value.
8. The standard in any country to apply to foreign laborers resident there as well as to nationals.
9. National inspection systems, in which women have part, to see that protective regulations of local lands are enforced.[2]

These principles are for the most part Christian commonplaces. It is not the business of the Church to enforce them, but it owes support to any agency which makes them its chief business.

(3) Maintaining public morals is also a vital concern of the Church but increasingly it is being done by commercial agencies. The Association of Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America

[2] See fully in Paul Périgord, "The International Labor Organization" (Appleton, 1926), Appendix I.

adopted in 1927 a "Formula with Reference to the Selection and Rejection of Certain Story Material for Picturization." It names eleven subjects which are not to appear in their pictures, such as profanity, licentiousness, ridicule of religion and willful offense to creeds and Churches, and twenty-six things which are to be safeguarded against offense when there is reason for using material which might involve them. International relations are to be presented so as to "avoid picturizing in an unfavorable light another country's religion, history, institutions, prominent people, and citizenry." Religion, the institution of marriage, law enforcement, public morals are to be picturized only in ways that protect them from contempt. The Association cannot control independent producers, and frankly sets a watch over its own members. The "Formula" means financial loss and the refusal of some pictures. All this is in line with the program of the Church in bringing the Kingdom of God, but the duty of maintaining a spirit which makes such actions possible cannot be neglected.

(4) The movement against war is by no means a Church campaign. But most of its leaders are men of the Church and measure their duty by the demands of Christ. Opposition on purely economic or industrial grounds is apt to be immediately successful but the only lasting impulses against war are moral—its violation of human rights and brotherhood, shaming a world where the Kingdom of God is to be established. All other arguments are helpful, but the Christian religion contains the final argument against war, an argument long overlooked—as was the Christian duty

of missions and social service—but coming to its power in our own day.

Large movements for human good have gone haltingly, not for lack of organization or careful detail but for lack of an adequate spirit. This is the case with the League of Nations. Difference about its details and dislike of this or that paragraph of its construction are not the real objections to it. The unhappy fact is that it makes too heavy drafts on mutual good will and confidence, demanding a spirit of trust and service which does not exist in sufficient measure to meet the draft. The production of this spirit is peculiarly the duty of the Church and all its agencies. Decades ago the Church began, in Sunday School classes and other groups, to create the feeling that the liquor traffic and Christianity were incompatible; in the long run it made a public opinion that was ready for action. There is no good reason why the same matter-of-course attitude against war and in favor of peaceful international relations cannot be developed. Other agencies may devise immediate remedies for the evil, but they will have to fall back on this public sentiment which no other agency can create so certainly as can the Church.

Direct Church Movements Toward the Kingdom of God. Major movements are in three forms:

1. *The Church is gaining unity of action.* Nothing is more needed and nothing seems at times more hopeless. Leaders still move uncertainly. Some want (*a*) mere unity of spirit; others, (*b*) Church federation, each Church or group of Churches remaining distinct, while coöperating in one program; others, (*c*) organic union of the Churches, allowing modifica-

tions within the one body, but making the Church actually and organically one. Which plan is most practicable in your own community? What do you think is feasible in the Church at large?

It is to be feared that the majority of Christians do not realize how much the witness of the Church is blurred, its work hindered, its influence weakened by the divisions of Christendom. If it is said that the spiritual unity is deeper and wider than the ecclesiastical differences indicate, it must be answered that the world to be influenced can only apprehend and appreciate a unity which is manifest and effective. . . . The Church cannot deliver its message of "peace on earth to men of good will" to a divided world as long as it itself appears divided in the world; it cannot fulfill its mission of the unification of mankind in the one Kingdom of God until its own unity is seen of all men.[8]

The missionary forces lead us at this point but they are sadly handicapped by home influences and are not free to move as rapidly toward coöperation as they would. In October, 1927, a meeting of Chinese Christians was held in Shanghai to consider forming a federation of Churches, all of them having grown out of mission work done by the different Western Churches. When the delegates met, they found that what they really wanted was organic union, absorbing all the Churches into one national body. This was the origin of the Church of Christ in China, in which many observers see the largest promise for the future of Christianity there. The official announcement says:

[8] Dr. A. E. Garvie at Lausanne, "Faith and Order," Report of World Conference on Faith and Order (Doubleday, Doran, 1927), p. 503.

The Church of Christ in China is a holy venture to secure all evangelical bodies in China to unite in one organic body for worship, mutual edification, and service, asking none to sacrifice beliefs which they deem vital to Christian living, none demanding of the others conformity to their particular tenets, but each bringing their contribution to the enrichment of all.

The Anglican Bishop of Dornakal describes a sad condition:

Four places of worship stand within a hundred yards of each other in one of the cities of India, each barely half full at any ordinary Sunday service, all ministered to by underpaid ministers, each too often engaged in unceasing warfare, not against the sin and suffering all around, but each against the supposed defects in the beliefs and practices of the others. Seven missionary societies are at work in my area among a population of a million people, five of which claim the exclusive possession of the gospel truth and, therefore, the right to enter and plant churches anywhere. . . . The Church cannot speak with a united voice; its witness is confused by contrary voices; men are not certain of their duty, and their consciences are not touched by the united authority of the one Church. . . . To present a common front and preach a common faith to the non-Christian world, we must be one.[4]

This is happily an extreme case, but similar voices have challenged the Church for decades and are gaining a hearing. A better attitude has been developed toward common interests. The Edinburgh (1910) and Jerusalem (1928) World Conferences were attended by all the principal Church agencies of world

[4] "Faith and Order" Report of Lausanne Conference (Doubleday, Doran, 1927), pp. 492, 493.

missions with representatives from all lands. Each conference led to continuing organizations, the outgrowth of the Jerusalem Conference being the permanent International Missionary Council, with headquarters in London and New York, consisting of twenty-three national federated groups of missionary agencies. This promises a more united and definite program of work as the Council includes all the major missionary bodies, only some smaller bodies refusing to enter it.

Most countries have federated their missionary agencies into bodies, such as the Home Missions Council of North America and the Foreign Missions Conference of North America (United States and Canada), and many lands (thirty in 1928) have their National Christian Councils.

Two specially impressive coördinated Church movements exist in America in the International Council of Religious Education and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America. (*a*) The International Council of Religious Education takes the place (since 1923) of the International Sunday School Association and the Sunday School Council of Evangelical Denominations, themselves indicative of the growing spirit of coöperation. It is made up of thirty-nine coöperating denominations, most of them holding relation to it through officers appointed by their highest bodies. It gives us our Sunday School lessons and a variety of courses for religious education, doing a much wider work than is generally thought of as "Sunday School work." Each denomination has still the privilege of acting independently if it chooses, but the tendency is to draw closer together in this

strong Council. The headquarters are in Chicago, where a large and busy office is maintained, operating through such departments as these: Department of Organization and Promotion; Department of Leadership Training; Department of Children's Work; Department of Young People's Work; Department of Research and Service; Department of Vacation Church Schools; Department of Home Visitation; Department of Adult Work; Department of Week Day Religious Education.

The Council conducts summer conferences for training teachers and other leaders, issues a monthly journal, and coöperates with state councils and other agencies for the same main object.

(*b*) The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America has twenty-eight constituent denominations. It has Commissions concerned with the larger issues of religion before the world, such as International Justice and Good Will, Industrial Relations, Social Service. In turn it is allied with local federations in almost all the larger American cities (forty in 1928), their duties being to coördinate the activities of the Churches, avoiding congestion in some sections and neglect of others. The constitution of the Federal Council states its purpose:

1. To express the fellowship and catholic unity of the Christian Church.
2. To bring the Christian bodies of America into united service for Christ and the world.
3. To encourage devotional fellowship and mutual counsel concerning the spiritual life and religious activities of the Churches.
4. To secure a larger combined influence for the Churches of Christ in all matters affecting the moral

and social condition of the people, so as to promote the application of the law of Christ in every relation of human life.

Two notable world conferences have been held looking toward Church understanding. The World Conference on Christian Life and Work occurred at Stockholm in 1925, and the Conference on Faith and Order occurred at Lausanne in 1927. Neither claimed legislative power—they were for conference only—but they revealed more agreement among Christian Churches in both Europe and America than was realized. It was necessary to admit uncleared differences, some of them at points where Christians might be expected to be most united.

In Richard Baxter's book, "The True and Only Way of Concord of All the Christian Churches," occurs the familiar quotation from Rupertus Meldenius: "In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in both essentials and nonessentials charity." But if there is true unity in essentials, it is difficult to see why there should be disunity anywhere. A professor in the University of Berlin said at Lausanne:

> So long as I know that a friend who is a member of another Christian Church must, according to the tenets of his Church, hold me to be damned and lost; so long as the Lord's Table, which should represent the deepest fellowship of the disciples of Christ, remains the symbol of their disunion; so long as the representatives of Churches must make reservations before they can join in Christian fellowship; just so long must fellowship be incomplete, must love remain imperfect, and the results which should proceed from the unity of the Head be unattained.[5]

[5] "Faith and Order," Report of Lausanne Conference (Doubleday, Doran, 1927), p. 478.

This feeling is increasing and is an augury of change in the practice of the Church. Organic union in large measure occurred (1925) in the coming together into the United Church of Canada of the Methodist, the Congregational, and most of the Presbyterian churches of that area. It is not complete union, both because a number of Presbyterian churches declined to enter it and because other denominations were not included. But it is the largest attempt toward the answer to our own and our Lord's prayer, John 17 : 21, in recent times. On a similar scale, the Churches in India and China have established union Churches, in each case limited by the refusal of some to join the movement. History ought to remind us that such things can be hastened too rapidly, though we are in danger of taking far more counsel of our fears than of our faith. What is now certain is that the desire for unity of action, leading to organic union, is growing in all Churches.

2. *The Church is making vigorous advance in the spread of the gospel in preparation for the Kingdom of God.* (*a*) The missionary movement is a direct contribution to the program and its recent changes are the outcome of its success.[6] The Bible has now become the most widely distributed book in the world and has been translated, in whole or in part, into more than seven hundred tongues. Believers sometimes speak of its destruction by critical scholars or other "enemies." This is wasted fear. New lines of approach to the Bible, new interpretations, new explanations of the human element in its origin, are ap-

[6] Cleland B. McAfee, "Changing Foreign Missions" (Revell, 1927), Chapters V, X.

pearing, but its special quality as the Word of God is not affected and its only need is to be given its chance. "Not misuse, but disuse" is its real danger.

(*b*) The initial task of the Church—evangelism—is receiving new attention, especially in the Pre-Easter season. The desire for social application of Christian principles seemed to minimize the duty of winning men to discipleship, but the later programs of evangelism have tended to balance the social movement. Most Church federations make this the major task of the spring and many extend it to Pentecost, fifty days after Easter. Three months are thus devoted in increasing numbers of churches to the work of winning men to Christ. The marked success of this special accent has made the duty of evangelism more clear in many minds. Some Churches and Church leaders had become so concerned for other legitimate phases of Christian work that they had almost forgotten the continued need for distinct evangelism. Large evangelistic meetings under a special leader have seemed less numerous in recent years than in the days of Dwight L. Moody, and this has made the normal, steady work of winning men to Christ all the more important. Nothing has happened in education or culture or social development to change the need for calling men to accept Christ as personal Saviour and Master.

(*c*) The educational program of the Church is being advanced. (1) The extension of periods of instruction is a recent phenomenon. Vacation Church Schools, formerly called Daily Vacation Bible Schools, and a rapidly widening program of week-day religious education have given the Church greatly increased

opportunities. Both movements are still feeling their way in some particulars, but there seems no reason to doubt their permanence. It was always futile to expect adequate results in Bible knowledge from a thirty-minute class period once a week. Gradually the remainder of the Sunday School hour has been directed toward fuller understanding of the Bible and religious experience and the session is often lengthened. (2) Public-school systems in most states have made allowance for religious instruction during school hours at the cost of the churches. Many state institutions give credit for Bible courses or other courses in religion at entrance and during the year. The Churches have now the responsibility for providing such courses and such instructors as will put this work on a parity with other studies, without losing its distinctive value in religion. This is no small task. It involves treating the Bible like other books and religion like other subjects and yet preserving the vital meaning of each.[7] (3) The Bible chair in a college is difficult to fill, because two extremes have to be avoided—making the classroom a devotional meeting rather than a real classroom, in which case the Bible loses the intellectual respect of students, and making the recitations so technical and mechanical that the Bible loses all vitality and is dismissed from consideration when the course is over as other textbooks are dismissed with relief. Effort is now being

[7] The laws or statutes of the various American states on the subject of Bible-reading or Bible-teaching in public schools, with or without school credit, have been collected in the volume, "Religious Education and the State" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928). Edited by Jerome K. Jackson and Constantine F. Malmberg.

made to train for Bible-teaching men who shall be as thoroughly prepared as any science or history teacher and yet shall retain a vital religious interest in their subject. As love of nature is not a sufficient warrant for science-teaching, so piety is not a sufficient equipment for Bible-teaching in college or out of it. Training ought not to destroy religious earnestness; piety ought not to lessen intellectual vigor. Meanwhile, every competent Bible teacher helps the Church to move forward in its program.

3. *The Church is making more definite application of the Christian religion to all of life.* (*a*) The change of building programs is notable. Equipment is now counted essential which would never have been considered by believers a century ago. Older men can recall the one-room period, leading to the two-room plan, then through the enlarged Sunday School building to the present elaborate equipment of modern churches. A single Oklahoma pastor has led his church from the one-room stage to a block of buildings in which are one auditorium seating 2600, another seating 800, a well-equipped kitchen with dining room capacity for about 1000, attractive social rooms, a gymnasium, and 149 rooms for church classes. This is a marked instance, yet any section of the country can furnish illustrations of this extension of church-building.

(*b*) The new plan involves an increase of staff and workers trained for distinct forms of service. In smaller churches the enlarged program can depend on voluntary workers, but in larger churches trained workers—for young people's activities, physical training, music, religious education—are common. Recent

years have seen such widening of "church work" as centuries before had not witnessed. In many churches the pastor is now the head of a staff of workers, and even if there are no other full-time workers he is expected to have a program of work which includes the entire life of the community. The Church has accepted responsibility for much that is the actual task of other agencies, its duty being only to see that it is done. Dr. Parkhurst has added a clause to a familiar verse, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth," Prov. 28:1: "but they make better time when somebody is after them!" Agencies often need a watchful eye and a prodding hand to keep them at their work. The Church may not need to provide recreation for the community, playgrounds, gymnasiums, and the rest, but it may need to see that such things exist. General education is not the business of the Church in most communities but the Church must see that schools are what they should be, intellectually, morally, and physically. The Church is sharing the life of humanity at all points. Moral and social conditions making life hard for the weak are its concern, whatever agency ought to be provoked to correct them. Police, courts, city governments, departments, officials, have their own tasks and the Church is under no obligation to relieve them, but they ought to find in the Church their strongest ally in faithful service and their most dangerous opponent in unfaithfulness.

(*c*) This movement to apply the Christian religion would naturally have its countermovement inside and outside the Church. Outside forces speak of dragging the Church in the dust, degrading holy things,

belittling the cause of religion. "The Church has its great and holy mission; let it stick to it and leave the degrading matters of politics and economics alone." But this counsel is not the outcome of zeal for the Church so much as of dislike of its activity. If the Church should ever set itself solidly against these wrong conditions it might disturb a number of factors thus far at peace. When outsiders praise the holiness or sanctity of the Church it is well to be watchful.

Opposition from within is more real. Opponents speak of diverting the Church from its spiritual task, which no other agency attempts. They urge that these "secular" agencies are the agents of God and that they are not the responsibility of the Church. The duty of the Church is to save men from the world and not to think of saving the world. But the lives with which the Church deals are exactly the lives that suffer in any failure of the worldly agencies. Of course there are duties which are peculiar to the Church which it cannot neglect. Jesus once said, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone," Luke 11:42. We are not to choose among duties; we are to do them all. Mr. Blatchford, the English socialist, speaks for many of us when he says:

> You have got to make your Utopia out of us human clay shapes, and to make it so that it will stand when it is made. If you succeed in overturning society, where do you expect to get your forty millions of pure-souled, clear-brained, generous citizens to carry on your Utopia?[8]

[8] Quoted by Frank Ballard in "Twentieth Century Christianity" (T. and T. Clark, 1927), p. 151.

If an ideal Christian order were introduced tomorrow, how long would it last while selfishness and suspicion continue? We must have enough men of its type who want it and will support it when it appears. Bernard Shaw's expression in the preface to his "Androcles and the Lion" is much quoted:

> I am no more a Christian than Pilate was, or you, gentle reader; and yet, like Pilate, I greatly prefer Jesus to Annas and Caiaphas; and I am ready to admit that after contemplating the world and human nature for nearly sixty years, I see no way out of the world's misery but the way which would have been found by Christ's will, if he had undertaken the way of a modern practical statesman.

The work of the Church in bringing men into discipleship under Christ is not less but more needed as the Christian ideal of the social order becomes more clear.

When Does "the Church" Move? In all these movements toward the program of the Kingdom, we must distinguish between the declarations of the Church at large and the actual program of churches, and also between the position of individuals and that of the churches of which they are part. These distinctions show some churches far ahead of their main Church body and others far behind it, so far ahead or behind that they sometimes speak of breaking with the main body because of it. Some individuals are in the same relation to their churches. Some resent the slow movement of their churches and others resent their overadvancement. In a single week a pastor had one man propose to withdraw from his church because it was too tame on the subject of prohibition and another because it had taken too

radical an action on the same subject. It is difficult to measure the movements because of these distinctions. When does the Church advance? Is it only when as a whole it makes some daring declaration of duty and responsibility? Or is the advance really made when a few daring souls step out into leadership and challenge the world and the Church in behalf of some cause of righteousness? When should the Church be blamed for hesitation—when its main court speaks and the rank and file are silent, or when they speak and it has not yet spoken? At any rate, "by long and by last," as gypsies say, the Church moves forward toward the fulfillment of the purpose of God in the gospel of Christ. The business of each person who loves it is to do his part in the forward movement, without too much complaint against others who may not do so well.

Further Suggested Reading

Jerusalem Conference Report, Vol. VII.

"Faith and Order," Report of Lausanne Conference (Doubleday, Doran, 1927).

"Christianity and Social Adventuring" (Century, 1927), especially pp. 85-115. Edited by Jerome Davis.

Shailer Mathews, "Jesus on Social Institutions" (Macmillan, 1928), Chapters III, IV.

William P. Shriver, "What Next in Home Missions?" (Missionary Education Movement, 1928), especially Chapters I, II.

Daniel J. Fleming, "Whither Bound in Missions?" (Association Press, 1925), Chapters I, IV, X.

Suggestions for Study XII

This closing study discusses some opportunities which now offer themselves to the Church. These are partly perennial—tasks which the Church can never hope to finish. Partly they are peculiar to our own day—tasks to be attempted and accomplished here and now. Discuss the question about the real value of individual effort in dealing with such huge evils.

Nine "opportunities for service" are listed:

1. Winning men to Christ, and so increasing the weight of the program in the community.

2. Adjusting its methods to new conditions. Discuss the problem of adjustment, its dangers and its values. Study the illustrations of efforts to do this.

3. Seeking closer internal unity. Recall the previous study.

4. Accomplishing intellectual reconciliation. How do you explain the difficulties of believers regarding scientific teachings? What ought religious teachers to do about them?

5. Building up new ideals of heroism and greatness. The chance to do heroic things in present life.

6. Teaching a right attitude toward possessions. Look up the references to Jesus' experiences.

7. Reviving the sense of the vitality of religion. What have we to say to those who speak of religion as "played out"?

8. Producing a force able to deal with world matters. Is your group local-minded or world-minded? What is being done about it by your Church? Are you compelled to form the world mind in order to be consistent with your Church?

9. Multiplying believers who are committed to the world program of Jesus. What distinction is to be made between being a disciple of Jesus and being an apostle? Item 1 in this list refers to disciples; how is this ninth item an advance beyond the first? How would you describe the people of your own church? How would your friends describe you?

Notebook: Write a discussion of the place of an ordinary member of the Church in helping it to accept these "opportunities for service." What can such a member (yourself, for example) actually do to help his Church to accomplish the nine things, or any of them, on the list? At first sight they may look somewhat remote from the daily possibilities of a Christian believer, busy with demanding duties, but does further thought sustain this appearance? Take time to write out a program of suggestions which a Church member might follow to help in any or all of these items.

STUDY XII

SOME PRESENT OPPORTUNITIES BEFORE THE CHURCH

THE achievements of the Church constitute its opportunity. Nothing is finished. The details suggested in Studies IX and X constitute opportunities—perennial needs which the Church can supply. Every movement for human good is an opportunity; if the Church did no more than contribute to these movements it would have abundant justification. But, of course, it must do much more. It must lead in critical movements and maintain ideals on which other movements are dependent. Our own day furnishes some special opportunities.

What can a plain individual do in presence of world conditions? If a reign of terror breaks out in a community, if a "crime wave" sweeps across a city, good men dislike it, but what can they do? Lord Bryce answered:

You may say, what can private citizens do? Well, the State is made up of private citizens and such as they are will the State be. Each of us as individuals can do little, but men animated by the same feeling and belief can do much. . . . The raindrops that fall from the clouds meet to form a tiny rill, and meeting other rills it becomes a rivulet and the rivulet grows into a brook and the brooks as they join into one an-

other swell into a river that sweeps on in its resistless course downwards to the sea. . . . What all the nations now need is a public opinion which shall in every nation give more constant thought and more attention to international policy and lift it to a higher plane.[1]

In the volume, "Building International Good Will," is a paper on "The Causes of War Which Lie in Ourselves." Had you ever thought that such causes lay within your own heart and life? We are saying a good deal about the duty of individuals to help to end war; is not that partly because the grounds of war are often to be found in individual feelings and attitudes? At the annual meeting of the American Sociological Society in December, 1928, a speaker said that it is "really remarkable how many people can help in dealing with the problem of unemployment if only they try to do so." That is true of all our social problems. Control is always by minorities —in public affairs and in all movements for good. No cause needs to win a majority opinion in order to succeed. All that it needs is the effort of a persistent, united group. Causes of good induce a solidarity which evil lacks. Selfishness disintegrates, unselfish devotion to a cause unites. Recall the Scripture statement that five shall chase a hundred, and a hundred shall chase ten thousand, Lev. 26:8. The increase in numbers is arithmetical; the increase in power is geometrical. So the cause of goodness is always hopeful. All it needs is a group who are in dead earnest and will not be denied. Bad causes cannot long hold such a group; selfishness quickly spoils

[1] Herbert A. Fisher, "James Bryce" (Macmillan, 1927), Vol. II, p. 283.

the unity. A good cause can hold its adherents to the end, for something in man responds to the call of goodness. As the cause gains momentum other men come to it, but those who wait for the majority are always belated in good movements.

People are needed who can crystallize scattered forces around good movements. The founder of the Salvation Army said of himself:

> I have been trying all my life to stretch out my arms so as to reach the poor with one hand and at the same time to keep the other in touch with the rich. But my arms are not long enough. I find when I am in touch with the poor I lose my hold upon the rich, and when I reach up to the rich I let go of the poor.[2]

General Booth did more than he knew to bring men together, so that the rich did not despise the poor or the poor hate the rich. In his great program they met. They ought to have a permanent meeting place in the program of the Church. Anyone can help just by being wide-minded in his own thought of humanity. A vast opportunity becomes a hindrance when humble men and women stand dazed and impotent before it instead of feeling its challenge and looking for the place where they can lay out their energy to best advantage. Each man ought to find some minority committed to the program of good and link his life with it, assured that here lies hope for the future. The Church itself is such a minority. It has never had a majority, but it has led the way in unnumbered movements for good and it has such movements under way all the time.

[2] Harold Begbie, "Life of General William Booth" (Macmillan, 1920), Vol. I, p. 384.

Opportunities for Service. 1. The Church has an unusual opportunity for *winning men to Christ* because (*a*) it is now in contact with life at more points than ever before. We have all that our fathers had to offer and much more. We see richer meanings in the gospel, and its service to human life is much wider. The Church is more a matter of course now; uniting with it is more in line with human practice than before. That is both a danger and an advantage. It is dangerous if it reduces the Church to the level of its surroundings, making membership in it undistinctive. It is an advantage in so far as it makes the appeal of the Church normal. The call to Christ is a call to the normal human life. Christ is the normative man. The word "holy" and the word "whole" are rooted alike, so that a holy man is a wholesome man, and something is wrong with a holiness that makes a man unwholesome among his fellows. The Church can make a more healthy appeal than ever before.

(*b*) The need for fellowship with Christ is as deep as ever. We do not lay final stress on personal salvation as was once done, but the fact remains that the work of social salvation is done by men who want others saved, and in the Christian program this brings a man to Christ's side. They said of Christ, "He saved others; himself he cannot save," Matt. 27:42. This is profoundly true of all men who try to help. But we are reminded that though Christ could not save himself, God did highly exalt him, Phil. 2:9. When Paul wrote of his concern that having preached to others he himself might become a castaway, or be rejected, he was speaking of the

danger of insincerity or pretense, I Cor. 9:27, not suggesting that a man might sincerely try to win other men to the faith of Christ and yet be lost himself. If, therefore, we lay less stress on personal salvation in the sense of getting to heaven, and more on the saved life of service, this does not renounce the human need for relation to Christ. All the reasons our fathers had for urging men to believe and trust in Christ are still valid and we have the added argument of a great Christian world program which any believer can help if he will.

(*c*) There are more non-Christians in the world than ever. There are more non-Christians in India than when Christian missions started there; more in China; more in Japan; more in Africa. It would not be fair to leave the matter there, for the rate of Christian increase is much more rapid than that of the population, and what was at first a mere handful has become a vital force. But the same fact is true in America or in any other Christian country. There are more non-Christians in America than there were when the Church was founded here; more in England; more in France. There are, of course, many more Christians also, but this multitude of non-Christians constitutes for the Church a thrilling opportunity, losing its thrill only because of its familiarity.

(*d*) In meeting this opportunity everyone can help. Everyone is in contact with some of these non-Christians and can help to reduce the number if he will. No Church has ever used up all its opportunity; no Christian has ever done so. Nor do we need long training for it. We learn to help other people to

Christ very much as a child learns to walk—just by keeping at it through all kinds of falls and struggles.

2. The widened contact of the Church with human life calls for *adjustment of its methods to its new conditions.* An old institution need not remain static; it can be dynamic and yet retain its permanency. The Church is often warned against being conformed to the world, allowing the world to alter its life. It is a wise warning. Along with it goes the further warning that it shall not lose touch with the world and become unfitted to render its needed service. We have already noted how Paul tried to become "all things to all men," I Cor. 9:22—but it was to save others, not to lose himself. There is a limit to the wise accommodation of the Church to the world, but there is equally a limit to its wise isolation from it. Salt yields to the shape and condition of the objects which it tries to preserve; light flows around objects freely, shaping itself to the situation it is to illumine; yet salt does not thus cease to be salt, nor light become darkness. The Church of to-day is in the world of to-day and it has to meet present problems. Its machinery of yesterday may be exactly what is needed now, as its gospel certainly is. But it may be as much out of date as the plows of India in the fields of America. Gradually this machinery always does become altered and adapted, but it is often unconsciously and belatedly done when it would have been better if the needs had been frankly faced and the machinery promptly adjusted.

The relation of the Church to political action is complicated just now because so many moral questions have come into the political sphere. Why is the

Church concerned about the prohibition law, or anti-gambling laws, or treaties outlawing war, or child labor, or governmental corruption? Obviously because these are essentially moral issues which have become political. But if the Church is interested after they pass into the political arena, how shall its interest be shown? Do existing methods provide for its effective expression?

In one city the Ministerial Association rebelled against the supineness of the party nominees for mayor in the matter of prohibition and other moral issues. They selected an unpromising but sound candidate, electioneered for him, in sermon and prayer meeting urged the people to vote for him, and kept it up until election day, when he was elected by a large majority.

> The politicians are still dazed, trying to figure out how it came about. But we know. It was due to the solidifying of the vote of the ordinary run of Christian people. . . . It was this vote—a vote on principle on a vital moral issue—on which we had counted, and the Lord stood by us and bound these folk together in a common effort. . . . It can be done anywhere, if the men and women of Christian principle will stand together. . . . Other cities will do the same, whenever the rank and file of the people of the churches are willing to override party lines and unite on the candidate who best represents their principles. There are enough of these good folk in any community to control its destinies.[3]

Would this meet approval in your own community? Would the Ministerial Association have been counted

[3] A newspaper account of an election in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, written by Dr. David de Forest Burrell, one of the pastors.

presumptuous? Can you think of any other way in which the same result could have been gained without this modification of accepted Church machinery?

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America is under constant fire when it investigates industrial difficulties and proposes remedies. It cannot speak with an official voice in such details and yet it has the official backing of the Churches and is their only united voice. Why should it not do this, even though it involves an activity of the Church in an unaccustomed field? If there is no machinery for it, ought machinery to be formed by which the Church may act effectively on such matters? If a labor disturbance breaks out in your community, involving the livelihood of many people and moral relations between employees and employers, threatening violence and damage to children, schools, and homes—what provision have the Churches for giving moral guidance? Such service is ordinarily left to free-lance, extreme spokesmen who often misrepresent the Christian gospel. Their activity sometimes leads balanced, thoughtful Church leaders to remain silent lest they bring their Churches into disrepute. Do you see any way for the Churches to serve the needs of their own time unless they devise machinery through which they can function without betrayal of their high duty in other respects?

When representatives of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America argued for treaty revision so that larger recognition could be given to Chinese autonomy and certain privileges heretofore held by missionaries and other foreign residents could be

modified, their action was disapproved by some (not all) of these residents—they were "mixing sentiment into what ought to be a cold business proposition." But suppose the Church of Christ wants to speak effectively and forcefully on the moral issues of international relations, what machinery has it that is not so new that many members do not know of its existence? How shall the Church now make its voice effective regarding war? Is there any way whereby its scattered opinion can be focused and brought sharply to bear on responsible officials, who will act if they know that they are well supported?

The Christian faith is a living reality and must sometimes break through limitations, as living bodies outgrow the clothing that once fitted them and as living plants outgrow the pots that once contained them. Church leaders must study its machinery and adapt it to the day in which its eternal gospel is to be applied.

3. No discussion in this field can go far without facing the necessity for *closer unity in the Church.* Jesus said that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, Mark 3:24. Since the Church does stand it is certain that it is not really divided against itself. No one seriously thinks that its divisions are so inherent that they could not be corrected if the true center of the Church, Christ himself, were kept central. Harnack's word is true, that "there is a large field in which all earnest Protestant Churches are in complete unanimity."[4] The Lausanne Conference adopted this declaration without dissent:

[4] Adolf von Harnack, "What Is Christianity?" (Putnam, 1923), Lecture XV.

We share in the conviction, repeatedly expressed in this Conference, that pending the solution of the questions of faith and order in which agreements have not yet been reached, it is possible for us, not simply as individuals but as Churches, to unite in the activities of brotherly service which Christ has committed to his disciples. We therefore commend to our Churches the consideration of the steps which may be immediately practicable to bring an existing unity in service to more effective expression.[5]

This suggests that we act as though we are less united than we really are. Our differences are real; they need not be divisive.

We shall never worship in the same way, but I think we shall one day recognize that all who love Christ are of our Communion and we shall unchurch nobody. In the meantime, I cannot wish that differences of temperament and genius that exist among us should be ironed out into a flat monotony when we approach God in public worship, or even wish that we were all alike. I feel at home in a Church of England service; I do not desire all men to feel as I do, and I respect and even like the differences which I must believe not offensive to God who made us all so individual and different.[6]

Union societies of young people, Sunday School workers, missionary workers, social workers, have prepared the way for more obvious unity and the ending of differences which the world cannot understand. Charges of strife among the Churches are absurdly exaggerated in most instances but we have unhappily given ground for them by unnecessary differences.

[5] "Faith and Order," Report of Lausanne Conference (Doubleday, Doran, 1927), p. 426.

[6] A. Maude Royden, "I Believe in God" (Harper, 1927), p. 274.

Under pressure of a new sense of obligation for the world, in the light of better understanding of each other, in presence of the many coöperative agencies in which they actually unite, the Churches can attain a closer organic unity.

Such movements have no clear sailing even to-day. The Lausanne Conference on Faith and Order (1927) appointed a Continuation Committee to carry on its spirit. At the meeting of this committee in the summer of 1928 a communication from one church group in America aroused much discussion.

> It expressed a hope that none of the national commissions would initiate experiments in unity under the ægis of Lausanne which would embarrass any Communion whose laws or canons forbade certain practices. . . . It created an atmosphere of helplessness over the whole situation. A distinguished Free Churchman remarked, "I see no use in further conference on Christian unity if [these brethren] are going to take the position, 'Talk about it but be careful never to practice it.' "

4. Opportunity is now offered for *lessening or entirely clearing the supposed conflict between Christian teaching and knowledge gained in other fields.* For people who believe in a rational universe there can be no ultimate conflict among truths. Religious truth and scientific truth, truth about religion and truth about history, truth in religion and truth in ethics cannot be contradictory.[7] Clement of Alexandria, a Church father of the third century, believed that the Greek philosophers were forerunners of Christ as

[7] Kirtley F. Mather, "Science in Search of God" (Holt, 1928), Chapters II, VI.

truly as were the Hebrew prophets, and left the saying: "Truth by whomsoever spoken is from God." We are having to learn the value of the saying with reference to scientific discoveries of our own day. Professor Rufus M. Jones says that no one thing impressed him more in going around the world than "the spell which science has thrown over the minds of youth to-day." With this spell the Church of Christ must reckon and it does so gladly when it clearly understands its opportunity.

No one can be an authority in all realms of knowledge. Only a very rare man can have the right to independent opinion in natural science and also in theoretical religion. Trouble begins when wisdom in one field seems to give one's half knowledge in another field undue weight. Religious men pass unwarranted judgment on the implications of scientific truth, or scientific men settle religious issues on the basis of judgments in their own field, and a conflict occurs which would end if each group would take account of the knowledge of the other. There are large areas of facts in both fields and none of them may rightly be denied even though their relation is still confused.

Young people in school are often disturbed by attacks or innuendoes on both sides but, since the religious emphasis occurs ordinarily one day and the other emphasis five days in the week, the nonreligious emphasis tends to prevail. In some university towns ministers attempt on Sundays to correct what may have been heard during the week. It cannot be done, and often it does not need to be done. A fuller understanding on both sides would save the effort. Scientific men are not always right and in their inferences,

outside of their own realm of facts, they are as often wrong as right; also this is unhappily true of religious teachers. Sydney Smith said that "dogmatism is puppyism full-grown," and the saying is most accurate here. Churchmen have no right to place students in such a position that they must abandon science in the interest of religion; nor have scientific teachers a right to set out irreligious inferences as facts and so to discredit religion in student minds. A writer in The Atlantic Monthly[8] asks, "Shall We Send Our Children to Church?" He attends church himself but is concerned over the mental and spiritual conflict which is likely to occur in his children when they are called to choose between what they are taught in school and what they are taught in church, and he feels that the grounds of the school teaching will seem more assured to them than the grounds of the other teaching.

There is fault on both sides; it must not be assumed that religious teachers are always wrong. They cannot remain silent or supine in the presence of some things that are taught in the name of science or history or investigation, but they need the appreciative spirit and a wider knowledge than most of them have; precisely as the average skeptical scientist or historian needs an appreciation of religion which can be got only out of acceptance of its meaning in personal life. There is not much to choose between an unscientific religionist and an irreligious scientist. Each is sure to get out of his field and claim an authority which does not travel so far. The

[8] December, 1927.

Church cannot safely allow this supposed conflict to be magnified.

5. In the intellectual field there is also opportunity for *building up new ideals of heroism and greatness.* Existing ideals are mainly responsible for the war spirit. Antiwar propaganda runs against prevailing ideas of heroism and heroic endeavor and magnificent service. It is idle to attack such heroism, because it is historical and genuine. In some propaganda it is assumed that there is no manly or worthy side to the men or the forces that make war. This is wasted energy, for there are always enough men who know better to weaken the argument Immediately after a war, in the customary reaction, some men who took part in it join this sneer, ridiculing their own spirit. They must be allowed to speak for themselves, of course, but they cannot speak for all. If we cannot say that men are belligerent by nature, since this is by no means proved, neither can we say that all who undertake war do it with malicious or hateful spirit and for selfish reasons, for this is no more proved. The heroes of war are probably no more overestimated than those of other human activities. All are shown upon examination to have clay in their gold.

Yet it is essential that other and more constructive ideals be developed in the current mind. Sir Francis Drake has statues in several places in honor of his service as an English sea warrior. In the village of Offenburg, Germany, however, there is a statue of Drake, "in honor of his having introduced the potato to Europe." An American paper commented:

It appears that the greatest of Elizabethan sea captains is shown grasping a bunch of potatoes, while its

inscription glorifies his memory as that of the man who first introduced the humble tuber to Europe. . . . One does not like to associate the name of a gallant of the heroic age with potatoes.

A correspondent objects:

It is perhaps in accordance with human nature that one of the greatest heroes in history should be indignantly defended when some mistaken foreigner attempts to give him credit for introducing the means of life to Europe. The idea that a splendid old fighter, who attained to glory by slaughter, should have his reputation stained by a humble addition to nutrition is really not to be endured. Powder and potatoes—what an anticlimax![9]

This is not so much "in accordance with human nature" as with human history, and new history can be made by magnifying the heroes of other forms of service of humanity. Professor James's "moral equivalent of war" already exists but it is not realized so widely as is war itself. This resolution, adopted by the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches in November, 1928, is aimed at a much disputed matter:

Without raising the question of the expediency of maintaining an adequate military and naval defense so long as the war system lasts, we deplore any tendencies which put undue emphasis on militarism in education. In particular, we oppose military training in all public and high schools and all compulsory military training in colleges and universities, except in institutions established for the specific purpose of military training.

What position ought the Church to take in this mat-

[9] William Lyon Phelps, in New York Tribune-Herald.

ter? How shall it present new ideals of heroism and greatness?

6. The Church needs to bring about *a right attitude toward possessions.* Money has such power now as earlier generations did not dream of and its misuse works correspondingly greater harm. In Scripture days it was a menace to friendly human relationships,[10] and yet it had no such power as it has today. "The gravest problem of the immediate future is the problem of money—not getting it but using it rightly." This is a large detail of the duty of stewardship. What is the relation of a man to his possessions, especially to that form which is least personal and most portable—his money? Whose is it? How far does the State have rights? How far does God have rights? How far does the man himself have rights? If any agency ought to know the answer to such questions it is surely the Church. Society is threatened by money, both through the power it gives and by the false ambitions it arouses. Families are broken up or are unhappy because of limitations which prevent their having—not what they need—but what people with more money can have. This part of the charter of the Church is widely neglected: "Be ye free from the love of money; content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee," Heb. 13:5.

There are rich men who are a blessing to the world; large wealth is much better in their hands than distributed among unhelpful people. Its very bulk is a

[10] Read the Minor Prophets and The Epistle of James, for example.

blessing. And there are rich men who are a perpetual peril to society, men who justify all the claims of socialistic equalization, from whom their ill-used possessions should be taken away. Everyone knows what makes the difference—stewardship. One uses wealth for increased burden-bearing; the other uses it selfishly.

Here again we meet the peril of ranking things or possessions above persons, of which much has already been said. Jesus faced it often. The people of Gadara asked him to leave their borders because he had disturbed their economic life in curing a man; in the choice between swine and souls they chose swine, Mark 5:16, 17. The rich fool, Luke 12:16, and Pharisaic opposition because of love of money, Luke 16:14, on one side are balanced by the widow who gave "all that she had" for the purposes of religion, Mark 12:41-44, and the woman with the alabaster box of ointment whose action Christ approved because it was a use of things in honor of personality, Mark 14:3-9. Many a father has learned when it was too late that his children had more things than character, because he had been too busy accumulating the means to get more things to attend to their needs as personalities. The Stewardship Department of the Presbyterian Church has issued a "business man's stewardship platform" which says that the Christian should "avoid covetousness, foolish pride, unseemly luxury, careless waste, and all excessive self-gratification in the use of money, remembering that it is a stewardship."

I believe that God intends that my business should produce fair and legitimate returns, sufficient—first,

to maintain my business on a sound economic basis; second, to provide myself and those dependent upon me an adequate living on a Christian level; third, to furnish all my business associates and their families income and leisure sufficient to enable them to realize a full and complete life; and fourth, to provide the resources needed fully to finance the agencies which promote the Christian program in my Church, in my community, and in the world. . . . I will acknowledge this stewardship of mine by carrying on the books of my business, or in my personal budget, a "Separated Portion Account." Into this account I will regularly set apart a definite proportion of my income, increasing it as my ability grows.

Such a program will do what legislative control of fortunes cannot do in removing all menace from large wealth.

7. Closely allied with this is the need of *reviving the sense of religion as vital.* Some men have lost assurance of the power of religion: what can it do, anyway? They have become cynical and contemptuous of programs for good: where is the power to execute such programs? Some have lost hope for the future of humanity: does not the wheel keep turning back to old conditions? Are we really making progress or are we only moving—squirrels in a cage? Many books foretell the downfall of our civilization and the lapsing of men into barbarism as has happened heretofore. Nothing stopped it then; why should anything stop it now? They frankly abandon the incarnate Christ, a factor in present history which the earlier chapters did not have. They make nothing of the claim that his coming has changed the outlook of humanity, yet this is the very essence of the Christian assurance. Without it why should men support

a Christian program? Why should they give their money and their time for a failing enterprise? Religion is, for many men, simply "played out" and they expect the world to look elsewhere or nowhere for its redemption or relief.

This is partly because the Church has used religion so largely for rebuke and correction and so little for joy and inspiration. It has been offered to sustain men in sorrow and disaster but less to inspire them for rich and full living; to help them to endure adversity rather than to correct it. We have treated this less as God's world, in which we may live joyously as his children, and more as an alien place from which we are to escape presently but which we must endure until we can escape. When the call comes to joy, and the full, rich life makes its claim, we fear it as a relaxing of religion and so our Christian faith loses reality to us. We can welcome this new richness of life without losing realization of the correction that religion always brings, which is always needed. The Church has a rich opportunity to show that religion is not one human interest, to be cared for on Sundays or by special exercises, but a spirit of life, to be expressed everywhere, making us live in God's world as though it were his. In it, therefore, lies the hope for the new social order and the new world. Just after the war, when many leaders were discouraged, Secretary Franklin K. Lane wrote to a friend in Europe:

I do not believe we will change the world much for the good out of any materialistic philosophy, or by any shifting of economic affairs. We need a revival—a belief in something bigger than ourselves and more

lasting than the world. If you have a religion that can get hold of people, grip them and lift them, for God's sake come over and help us.[11]

The Church has reason to believe that Christianity is just such a religion, but it must be made vital and effective in the minds of men before it has its chance.

8. The Church has opportunity to aid in *producing a force which can deal properly with world matters.* The local mind menaces all great movements. Organizations cannot make headway against it.

A true world brotherhood would no more need a League of Nations to ward off war than in any happy family there is need, morning by morning, that the children should sign a solemn covenant that they will not murder each other during the day.[12]

The right machinery for international relations is not primary, but a spirit to which even the plainest of us can contribute. Dr. Sam Higginbottom, returning to India through Europe, wrote of "government by irritation" as he crossed the boundaries of petty states, each protecting itself from the others. He noted fruit wasted in some places and direfully needed elsewhere.

The market is there and the fruit is there. The reason for failure to take advantage of these good markets is the difficulty of passing the train from one country to markets in another through all the intervening countries. The tariff barriers, the delays, the suspicion, and the lack of trust make it almost impossible to send this wonderful fruit and these vege-

[11] Quoted in "Building International Good Will" (Macmillan, 1927), p. 40.

[12] See Frank Ballard, "Twentieth Century Christianity" (T. and T. Clark, 1927), p. 18.

tables to a market that would like to get them. It seemed to me that I had never traveled in any place where the angels' message of peace on earth and good will among men would have meant more than through this potentially rich but actually poor territory of eastern Europe.

And this from a missionary in India! He is right: the failure is in spirit; organization could soon be adjusted. Who shall preach a gospel of brotherhood and helpfulness, producing a united world force to deal with problems on a spiritual basis, if not the Church of Christ? At the same meeting of the World Alliance in which the resolution above quoted was adopted, this declaration was also made:

A well-directed program of guidance, beginning with the early years and continuing throughout the formative period of youth, will not only prevent racial and national prejudices from forming, but will create in the emotional life of the individual the foundations for good will and sympathetic world-mindedness. To this end we recommend the organization of specific courses in our schools and colleges for the appreciative study of other peoples and cultures as well as our own, and the preparation of a larger number of teachers qualified to conduct such courses. We particularly stress the responsibility of our Churches and other religious organizations for the education of their children in the ideals and processes of peace.

Can you suggest better ways of preparing a body of people for a better day in the future?

9. But, of course, this means *the committing of an increasing number of believers to the program of Christ.* This is an advance on the winning of individuals to Christ; it is conversion to his program, his plan for life. Those whom Jesus first called to him

were known as "disciples"—that is, they became learners; before he was through with them they became "apostles"—that is, messengers. Knowing Jesus' program is one thing; committing oneself to it unqualifiedly and sacrificially is a vastly different thing. It is beautiful to live the Christian life in one's small circle; it is even more beautiful to be an aggressive agent in getting that life lived around the world. The opportunity before the Church now is to bring about the conversion of belief into service, to make of religion not so much a thing accepted as a law of life obeyed.

The Protestant Episcopal bishops in a pastoral letter (1927) deprecated the saying that "the Church is as idle as a painted picture," but added:

Something is radically wrong with the Church. The trouble lies deep. It has little to do with material resources, organization, or membership, but rather with the spirit. We are convinced that the Church has failed to stress the note that Christians are "saved to serve." For so long we have allowed people to think of the Church as ministering chiefly to their own spiritual needs that it will take both time and effort to change that attitude. They must learn that instead of being merely sheep to be tended they are primarily soldiers enlisted for a desperate warfare. . . . This means nothing less than a complete change of mind, a reorientation of our whole attitude, a new baptism of the Spirit.

The world needs this change as rapidly as possible. It will pour a steady stream of redemptive influence into its life. It is the business of the Church, for it will bring the Kingdom of God into reality and power in the world. It will do the will of the One

for whom the Church supremely cares, the One who taught the Church to pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Further Suggested Reading

Bishop Ernest W. Barnes, "Should Such a Faith Offend?" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), Chapters I, XIX, XXIV, XXIX.

John Baillie, "Roots of Religion in the Human Soul" (Doubleday, Doran, 1926).

Albert W. Beaven, "Putting the Church on a Full Time Basis" (Doubleday, Doran, 1928), gives details of an interesting and successful program of church work, especially within a parish.

William A. Brown, "Beliefs That Matter" (Scribners, 1928), Chapter VII.

G. Sherwood Eddy, "New Challenges to Faith; What Shall I Believe in the Light of Psychology and the New Science?" (Doubleday, Doran, 1926), Chapters I, II, VI.

Rufus M. Jones, "The New Quest" (Macmillan, 1928).

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